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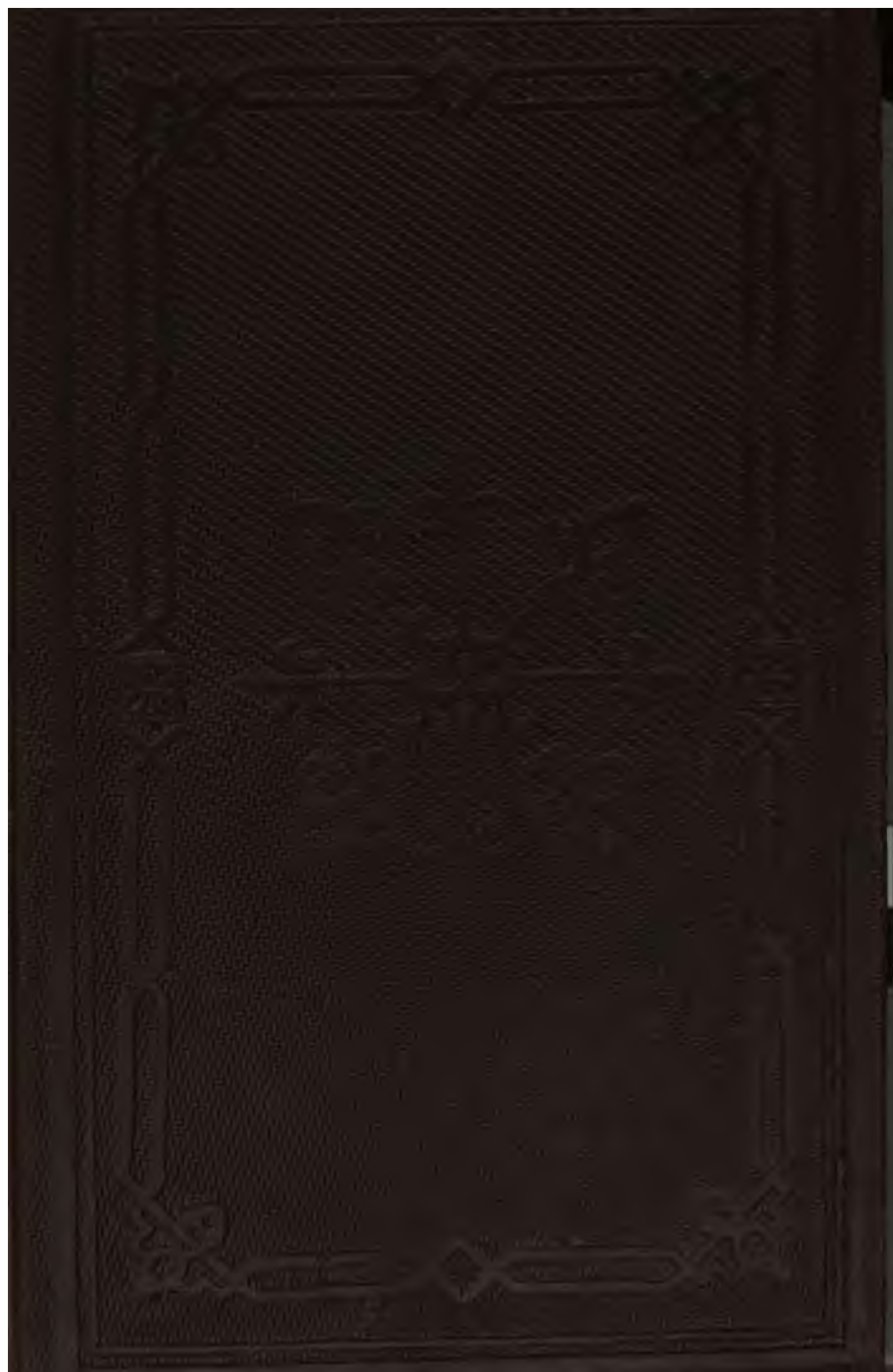
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M.33. COTTON. CLEOPAT. E.V.

lognociori ac huiusmodi, ut Regia Maritima
qua buni cotular, oro. prius aut

SPIRIT OF THE REFORMATION.

MELANCTHON,

THEOLOGIAN OF PROTESTANT GERMANY.



BY THE

REV. WILLIAM H. RULE, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "RICHARD I. AND THE THIRD CRUSADE,"
"MOHAMMED II. AND THE FALL OF THE GREEK EMPIRE,"
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SPIRIT OF THE REFORMATION.

MELANCTHON.

BIRTH AND BOYHOOD.

PHILIP MELANCTHON was born February 16th, 1497. His birth-place is Bretten, a small town in the Circle of the Rhine, situate where the territory of the Rhenish Palatinate then bounded on that of Wurtemberg, towards the east, and on the high road from Italy and France into Germany: a small town, not distinguished by any magnificence of architecture, but beautifully situated, well fortified, and so strong that, in a war with Wurtemberg, it had stood a severe siege by the Duke, being defended by a brave garrison. It was the strong place whither people from the surrounding country fled for refuge in tumultuous times. The inhabitants were of gentle manners, far from rich, but of martial spirit.

The townsfolk, justly proud of their illustrious fellow-citizen, distinguished the house where he first drew breath by an inscription to the effect that, "by the goodness of God, the most learned Doctor Philip Melancthon was born in that house on the 16th day of February, 1497." * And this remained for several generations.

George Schwartzerd, Philip's father, after marrying Barbara, a daughter of John Reuter, who had been Governor of the town for several years, had removed to Bretten. This George was an armorer by profession,

* Melchior Adamus, Vit. Germ. Theolog.

"DEI PIETATE NATUS EST IN
HAC DOMO DOCTISSIMUS DN.
PHILIPPUS MELANCTHON D.
XVI. FEBR. A. M. OCCC. XCVII."

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remarkable for probity, modest, and famous for skill in making armour for warriors in close combat, as well as for constructing cannons, and for teaching the art of gunnery. He was, therefore, a man of considerable importance, known and favoured by some of the German Princes. The religion of this man was of the best sort going in those days. It permitted him to favour his patrons in the manufacture of weapons, so as to secure them certain and easy victory; and he was exact in matters of ceremony, even to superstition. They say that he never indulged in jokes, much less in profanity, nor betrayed the least impiety, in word or deed. He died when Philip was eleven years of age.

Barbara, the mother, was not a devotee, but a good woman in her way; very superstitious, thrifty, and intelligent. A prudential maxim, as versified by her pen, survives to this day, teaching that they who live beyond their income are on the way to ruin, perhaps to crime.*

On the death of the father, Barbara was left with five children, our Philip, George, then four years old, and three sisters. The maternal grandfather took charge of the two boys, and sent them to school in Bretten, together with George, a young uncle, to a person named John Hungarus, an Ecclesiastic, but at that time no better than he should be, as appeared by unquestionable evidence. The children were therefore called home,†

* Melchior Adam gives it in old German :

“ Wer mehr wil verzeren,
Denn sein pfug kan ereren,
Der wird zu lezt verderben,
Und vielleicht am galgn sterben.”

† Camerarius, *Vita Ph. Melancthonis*, sect. 2: “*Cœpit tum lues fœda passim homines in Germania primum invadere, et miserum in modum non solum excruciendo sed mutilando et membra depascendo affligere, quam Hispanicam nonnulli, plerique Gallicam nominabant. Quo malo quum magistrum ludi avus puerorum laborare rescivisset, contagionem metuens, nepotes cum filio domi apud se retinendos duxit.*”

Camerarius was an intimate friend of Melancthon, and his only original biographer. In the following pages, therefore, at least in those parts which are strictly biographical, great use will be made of him; and when there is no note to show the contrary, it may be understood that he is the authority. But the book is very defective.

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where the grandfather himself, John Reuter, saw them well grounded in the first elements of learning.

An excellent genius dawned early in Philip. He quickly perceived and comprehended whatever was taught him, and could both retain it in his memory, and bring it out with fluency whenever questioned. It pleased him so well to communicate his newly-acquired knowledge, that he could seldom rest until he found some one with whom to enter into conversation. Not satisfied with the society of boys like himself, he preferred that of travelling students; and was delighted when he could find men of mature age, scholastics, whose vocation was controversy, but whom he sometimes puzzled sadly by leading them beyond their depth. This early talent won him vast admiration; and, on the death of his grandfather, his mother's friends agreed that he should be assisted to pursue his studies with every possible advantage.

It was observed that, although this boy had a power of acquiring knowledge beyond most of his age, and gave undoubted indications of a keen and sagacious mind, and great force of genius, his disposition was extremely gentle, instantly conciliating the good opinion of all who saw him; giving reason to hope that, when he attained the vigour of manhood, he would not be betrayed into the austere severity that often spoils men of superior attainments, but that the same gravity and mildness would still unite in him. This hope was eminently realized. He was a lovely boy, diffident, rather lisping in speech, yet self-possessed; the early image of that illustrious manhood that the world admires to this day.

But before proceeding to review his more severe studies, and to name his masters, we must pause to survey the state of Christendom in the year of his birth, and during the period of his childhood.

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On the very morning of Melancthon's birth-day, while presages of change were murmured all over Europe, one forewarning voice was lifted up at Florence, in the cathe-

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dral church. Friar Jerome of Ferrara, although forbidden by the Pope to preach, was there before a vast auditory, pouring forth sentences that resounded through the world. The sermon, just as it first issued from the press, is now before me, and I translate a few sentences to tell what thoughts were then passing through the minds of men.

The intrepid orator took the words of Moses for his text: "They will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice;" and, after discoursing with great coolness concerning the seven sacraments, and other matters having little relation to the text, launched some burning invectives against his brother clerks. Let us just hear a few of them, detached and sudden, flashing from lips which no Papal interdict could shut, so long as life lasted.

"Paul, being poor, wrought with his own hands. Peter, too, was poor, and so the others; and yet the rod of churchly power was lifted up on high, and carried erect towards heaven. I have told thee before, how, in the presence of St. Thomas, a bowl-full of ducats was presented to the Pope,—they came, perhaps, by way of tribute to the Chancery. The Pope, who knew that St. Thomas was a child of the Lord, and had himself possessed riches, said, 'O Thomas! the Church cannot say, as she said at first, Silver and gold have I none.' St. Thomas answered, 'Neither can she say, Arise and walk, as she said at first.'

"Ah! ribald wretches! Ye have abused this power of the shepherd's crook, and God will smite you with a rod of iron."

"The pastoral staff did not then lead harlots into the palace [as does Alexander VI. now reigning]. He does not now say any more, 'My nephews,' but, 'My son, and my daughter' [as does Alexander VI.]. Harlots are walking in St. Peter's; every Priest has his own concubine, their sins are committed openly, and their poison flows through all the world; so that all things are poisoned. So much poison is there at Rome that it flows over, and streams into all the world—into France—into Germany—everywhere poison! What must be done, then, if all is dregs and poison? Does it follow

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that, if Christ cannot prevent it, the Church will fail? But I have told thee already that the Church cannot fail: therefore, Christ must be able to renew the Church.

"Ah! serpent! serpent! body ecclesiastical! I will have no friendship with thee [saith the Lord]. I will put enmity between good men and thee. Bad men will like thee, but good men will abhor to look upon thee.

"What do we hear said now? 'Would you live well? Then do not go to Rome. Have nought to do with Prelates.' My Friars, go not you to Rome. It is well known among Friars, that when any of them have been at Rome but for a little time, they come back again like soldiers rather than like Monks. That, I tell you, is pestilential poison: it infects the air, the garments, every thing! Would you make your son wicked? Then make a Priest of him.

"I tell you that I would rather go among the Turks and Moors than go to Rome; for, at least, they would let us do our duty, say our masses, and preach our sermons. The Turks do not hinder the Christians from doing their duty."*

The voice that uttered these bitter truths was very soon to be choked at the gallows; but already it reverberated in every land called Christian. The same stern monitor had stood before the reigning Sovereign of France, who read his writings, revered him as a prophet, and immediately on returning from Italy set himself to humble the Church and Court of Rome. One can scarcely doubt that Charles VIII. was impelled by the plain speaking of Savonarola to assail the Papacy in France, and there prepare the way for a mighty host of reformers.

This very year, 1497, His Majesty called in the Faculty of Theology in Paris to decide whether the Pope was not bound to convoke a Council representing the universal Church, to remedy the disorder manifest throughout all the Church, both in head and members; whether the

* *Predicha facta el Giovedi doppo la prima Domenicha di Quaresima.* Without date or place, but probably printed secretly at Florence in 1497 or 1498.

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King should not convoke such a Council, if the Pope, being summoned and required, refused so to do; and whether, in case of his refusal to summon a General Council, the King and clergy might not hold a national Council for the reformation of the Church in France. The Faculty answered these questions affirmatively; but the King did not live many months longer, and his purpose, therefore, was not carried into effect.*

This very year, 1497, another party of reformers were strenuously labouring to establish their cause in our own island. They dispersed articles throughout the counties of Kyle and Cunningham, in Scotland, against image-worship, relics, religious wars, priestly absolution, transubstantiation, tithes, Papal supremacy, bulls, indulgences, masses for the dead, purgatory, excommunication, and some other things which ought not to have been laid under equal condemnation. About thirty persons, some of them gentlemen of rank and influence, were cited to answer for those articles before the Archbishop of Glasgow. Him their boldness overawed, and he dismissed them untouched, fearing lest he should bring down an armed Gospel on the clergy.†

Clear it is, then, that the Protestant Reformation, as it is called, but not very correctly, was not the work of Luther or Zuinglius, of Calvin or Melancthon. Many proofs of antecedent reformation might be gathered from earlier times; but our attention is now confined to events contemporary with the boyhood of Melancthon.

Everything threatened ruin to the Papacy, which seemed falling into utter confusion. Savonarola, whom I have just quoted, was hung at Florence, and his body burnt; but myriads of admirers, all over Europe, held him to be a martyr. Yet in Rome, where such fiery zeal raged against an honest man, the standard of doctrine had sunk so low, that the Master of the Sacred Palace, Pedro de Aranda, Bishop of Calahorra, was said to be convicted of Judaism, and lay prisoner in the Castle of St. Angelo, as a Jew.

The reigning Pope, Alexander VI., of whom I have

* Fleury, *Hist. Eccles.*, livre cxviii. 133, 134; cxix. 3.

† Collier's *Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain*, book vii.

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spoken elsewhere * at sufficient length, was as indifferent to the morality of others as to his own. He sold licenses for divorce and second marriages, on mere political considerations, to the Kings of England and France; and, in the former case, his successor, Julius II., unconsciously laid the foundation of a quarrel that happily severed these realms from the jurisdiction of the Roman See. Besides the scandals of his private life, that Pontiff, and his warlike successor, by wantonly drawing the sword upon several of the Italian states, drew down upon themselves and their throne the abhorrence of mankind.

On the year of Jubilee, as they call it, (A.D. 1500,) the Pope laid heavy imposts on the clergy, and even on the Jews; and the exactions of travelling agents who collected money from the laity, ostensibly for making war on the Turks, but really for feeding Roman profligates, excited universal discontent. And, soon after this, Julius II. laid the foundation-stone of the new cathedral of St. Peter's, which was forthwith to be raised by another sale of indulgences. The former of these two expedients for gathering money on the strength of superstition stirred up discontent; the second, too soon repeated, moved Luther, Germany, and all Christendom to enter on the great controversy of the sixteenth century. No indiscretion could have been more opportune.

The death of Alexander VI. in 1503, by poison, was the signal for a revolution of several insurgent states, aggravating the horrors of civil war in Italy, and exhausting the little power yet remaining in the sovereignty of the Papal State. The successor† of this Pontiff, Julius II., who gratified his military vanity by borrowing the name of Julius Cæsar, made the evil, if possible, yet more flagrant, and provoked a general hostility to the Roman See, which was expressed—harmlessly indeed—by Louis XII. of France, who caused a medal to be struck with the inscription, *Perdam Babylonis nomen*, "I will destroy the name of Babylon." Millions agreed with Louis; but it was easier to stamp

* Dawn of the Reformation, p. 259.

† Pius III., who succeeded Alexander VI., lived only twenty-six days after his election.

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the desire on a medal than to execute it in effect. Nevertheless, a few years only had intervened when the world thought that Babylon was falling indeed.

And while the Papacy committed its fortunes to the decision of the sword, a new spiritual enemy arose in Bohemia, to dispute its power more effectually than even Huss and his followers had done. *They* contended for the sacrament in both kinds; and, although agreeing with the Wycliffites in various points of doctrine, were not only defective in theology, like them, but insisted so much on that single point, and were so ready to contend for it with worldly weapons, that they lost the advantage which a firmer array of moral power, with less reliance upon force, would have given them. *These*, being persecuted by the Calixtines, their former brethren, appealed to the King of Bohemia for protection, and presented a Confession of Faith much resembling that of the old Waldenses, and clearly anticipating the more finished Confession of Augsburg, which Melancthon afterwards drew up, in conjunction with other theologians. This more advanced Bohemian confession was produced in the year 1504.

The Waldenses, too, were brought out into more public notice by their very enemies about the same time. Some Cardinals and Bishops endeavoured to provoke the zeal of Louis XII. against the Waldenses of his dominions, by representing them as wizards, incestuous, and heretics, not fit to live upon the earth. Hearing of this, the Waldenses resolved to apply to the King on their own behalf, and sent messengers to declare their innocence. These messengers assured His Majesty that they believed the Gospel, read the Bible, recited the Apostles' Creed, kept God's commandments, and observed sacraments; but did not acknowledge the Pope, nor believe his doctrine. Louis caused a solemn inquisition to be made into their doctrine and practices, and was informed by those who made it, that they baptized their infants, taught their children the Articles of Faith and the Ten Commandments, religiously observed the Lord's day, and expounded the word of God. There was no witchcraft nor immorality among them. There were no images in

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their churches, nor any ornaments exhibited at their mass. On hearing this, the King exclaimed, "Those men are better than I and all my people." This was no secret: it gave the Waldenses great boldness, and drew attention to them and their religion all over France.

No people could be more unlike their enemies. They cultivated an intelligent familiarity with the text of holy Scripture; whereas Alfonso de Castro, one of the most accomplished opponents of all heretics, a man who afterwards figured in the pulpits of England in the reign of Queen Mary, had so dull an apprehension of the discredit of ignorance, that he founded an argument against private judgment on the inability of Popes to understand the sacred text until they had consulted "learned men." * By the Romish authorities, the Bible was not admitted into academies and public schools; and the Rectors and Assistants were forbidden, as in the year 1504, by a statute of the Bishops of Misnia, to explain, either publicly or privately, the books of holy Scripture, *libros sacre pagine*.† But about this time new academies were springing up all over Germany, and placed under the direction of masters who could not be restrained within the old limits; but, thirsting for forbidden knowledge, gained far more than their superiors, and communicated in secret what statute or prejudice forbade them to produce in public.

At this particular time, then, while young Philip Schwartzerd was growing up into youth, the public mind received new impressions daily,—the dominant hierarchy was undoubtedly in worse repute than it ever has been since, and perhaps worse than it ever had been before,—the agitation of great political questions between rival kingdoms and states, not forgetting the religious

* Gerdes (tom. i., sect. 17) quotes from the Cologne edition of De Castro, 1539, that "plures adeo illiterati erant ut Grammaticam penitus ignorarent," and says that these words were expurgated from the edition of Paris of 1565, and others following. My edition is of Venice, 1546, and is also defective in the passage where, as I suppose, the words ought to occur. But I only relate his argument as I read it there, lib. i., — "ut Papam, qui in quolibet re seriâ definiendâ consulere debet viros doctos."

† Löschneri, Acta et Documenta, tom. i., pp. 117, 118.

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disputes growing out of the wars of Mohammedan and Christian powers, the rise of new sectaries, the re-appearance of old ones, and revived dissatisfaction with the exactions of the Court of Rome,—all this gave an unprecedented impulse to intellectual activity. It also prepared men to enter on a new career of doctrine, both in religion and philosophy; and whereas, at an earlier period, a youth like Melancthon might have been very amiable, but would have lacked the impulse, the objects, and the examples that combine to give direction to talent, for him instructors were now provided and a work prepared.

SIMLER AND REUCHLIN, HIS TEACHERS.

In those days the most approved school in the Circle of the Rhine was that of Pforzheim. George Simler taught there with great applause, and, according to the standard of his time, was a scholar of the first class. He strove to keep up with the advance of education, was exact in detail, put good books into the hands of his pupils, and was not much afraid of innovation. A desire to learn Greek laid hold on all persons who aspired after the credit of being well taught; and both old and young were labouring to read Greek books, most of them impelled by curiosity rather than guided by judgment.

At first Simler thought that Grecian learning was not to be made too common, and, careful not to cast the Attic pearls before the herd at Pforzheim, selected only a few favourite boys, and taught them privately, in a class apart, as a mark of distinguishing regard. Our Philip was a member of that select class, and won general applause by his diligence and progress, which were unequalled. John Hungarus, whom he named honourably thirty years afterwards, as a "learned and honest man," grounded him in Latin. His brother George and his young uncle John were again at the same school with him, and the three lodged in the house of a distant relative, a sister of John Reuchlin, or Capnio. (These two words are equivalent, *καπνίον*, like the German, being the diminutive of the Greek word signifying "smoke.")

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It often happened that Reuchlin came to Pforzheim to visit this sister, and take part in the affairs of the town, his native place; and during those visits he used to interest himself in the progress of these three boys, with the warmth characteristic of an enthusiastic student. But Reuchlin was so eminent a man, and exerted so great an influence over the education and career of his young relative, that we must, for a few moments, digress to mark his relation to the age. An historian of the Palatinate chiefly supplies the information we require.*

After the death of Rudolph Agricola, about the year 1497, Reuchlin succeeded him in the Academy of Heidelberg. He had himself studied both in Paris and Basil, under that master of immortal memory, Wessel of Groningen: adding to the ordinary acquisitions of Latin and philosophy, the elements of Hebrew, and, better still, his master's more enlightened views of religious doctrine, which he constantly retained. By the earnest advice of Wessel, Reuchlin prosecuted the study of Greek beyond the scanty elements he had mastered, by going to Basil, where the Cardinal Nicholas de Cusa, who attended at the Council holden there, had deposited a considerable collection of Greek books. Thence he passed to Tübingen, and thence to the new Academy at Wittenberg, of which more presently.

From Wittenberg he removed, to escape from a Monk who had set his heart on killing so mischievous a heretic as this Grecian professor; and then it was that he established himself at Heidelberg, surrounded by great and learned men, who paid him the highest honour.

Rupert, Prince Palatine, desiring to marry his cousin, only daughter of George, the rich Duke of Bavaria, Reuchlin was sent to Rome in the quality of Ambassador, to obtain a dispensation from Alexander VI. Not the conscience of Pope Alexander, but the usual delays of office, kept him a full year in Rome; and of that time he made the best possible use, by prosecuting his studies with facilities not known in Germany. First of all, he applied himself to Hebrew, with the help of one Abdiah,

* *Henricus Altingius, apud Seckendorffium Com. Hist. Lutheran., lib. i., sect. 27.*

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a Jew, whom he hired at the exorbitant price of a ducat for every hour. But he extracted Hebrew knowledge at such a rate, that, on return to his country, he could so teach the sacred language, that no competitor was able to stand before him.

At that time, too, the celebrated Argyropulus, an exile from Constantinople, when it fell under Mohammed II., was yet living in Rome, and teaching ancient Greek, for which he had a public stipend. Men of all ages and ranks gathered round him, noble and ignoble, Cardinals and Bishops, all ambitious or athirst for this new acquirement; and he read, interpreted, and lectured in their hearing. The German Ambassador, attended by a train suited to his dignity, one day went to the lecture, seated himself with the expectant auditory, and before Argyropulus ascended the professorial chair hastened to pay his respects to the venerable Greek, tell him how he deplored the dispersion of his countrymen, and solicit permission to be numbered with his disciples. They spoke in Latin, and a note of their brief colloquy reveals an interesting passage of literary history.

"Of what country are you?"

"I come from Germany."

"Do you know anything of Greek?"

"A little."

"Then read me into Latin a passage in this book."

A volume of Thucydides was put into the hands of Reuchlin: the mixed assembly listened curiously to hear how the stranger would make his beginning. Argyropulus, too, listened for the first rude accents of his German pupil. To the surprise of all, he read clearly, with elegant pronunciation, with an intelligent emphasis, and gave, sentence by sentence, a correct interpretation in purest Latin. Tears gushed from the eyes of the aged refugee, and, as soon as he could find utterance, he exclaimed, *Græcia nostro exilio Alpes transvolavit*. "With our exile Greece has passed beyond the Alps."

Thus did he divine that a knowledge of the Greek language, which then began to spread itself far and wide, would shed its light on the pursuit of all arts, and be the harbinger of sound learning to the most barbarous

SIMLER AND REUCHLIN, HIS TEACHERS.

nations, among which Germany was counted by the polite Italians.

Having obtained the dispensation, Reuchlin returned to the Elector, rendered an account of his mission, and, this done, soon returned to Tübingen, and gave himself anew to Hebrew studies,—studies of inestimable value, but neglected by the majority of students, even in the nineteenth century, to the detriment of theology itself.

This Hebrew knowledge brought down a torrent of ill-will on Reuchlin. Instigated by a worthless proselyte from Judaism, one Pfefferkorn, (Pfefferkorn,) certain Dominican Monks and Inquisitors at Cologne demanded that all Hebrew books should be burnt. Their petition came before the Emperor Maximilian I., whose mildness indisposed him to pass a hasty sentence for any kind of persecution; and the question was referred to Reuchlin for decision. His judgment was, that most of the Hebrew books should be preserved, and those only burnt which contained anything expressly hostile to Christianity. The theologians of Cologne shuddered, as did their brethren in the University of Paris; and the tract which the learned Hebraist had written on the subject was bravely burnt in both those cities. To burn the writer was the next thing to be done; and Jacob Hochstraten, the Inquisitor of Cologne, took such action as he could to that intent. But Reuchlin was acquitted, and the Inquisitor condemned in costs. Hochstraten and the Monks had friends at Rome, where, just then, the alarm of heresy was newly raised, and Silvestro Prierio, Master of the Sacred Palace, afterwards known as an antagonist of Luther, managed to have the cause evoked to that court, where it lingered for some years. Maximilian, and many German Princes, made intercession for the Hebraist, while the Inquisitors thirsted for their prey; but meanwhile the cause hung in doubt, and a natural death caught Reuchlin from their clutches, in the year 1522.

This was the first patron of Philip Schwartzerd in Pforzheim. Of the three lads at his sister's house, Reuchlin chiefly admired Philip, conceived high hopes of his future eminence, and gave him several books. Among these, was a fuller treatise on the Greek language than

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any he had ever seen, with a Lexicon, at that time quite a novelty. Furnished with these helps, Philip applied himself to the study with renovated zeal, entered on prose composition, and rapidly advanced to verse. Whenever Reuchlin came to Pforzheim, Philip was used to bring him some of his literary exercises; and the Professor, delighted with the boy's confidence, which his own generosity must have kindled, playfully gave him a Doctor's cap. Philip felt that this was meant to signify an honour one day to be attained; and not only wore the cap, but resolved that he would deserve it. Ere long, a Latin play was written by this rudimental Doctor, and performed with great applause by the school of Simler before their learned visitor at his next appearance.

Then Reuchlin saluted his young friend as *Melancthon*, *μελάγχθων*, (equivalent with his German name, *Schwartz-erd*, "black earth,") just as he had seen his own master, Hermolaus Barbarus, by a similar translation, inducted into the circle of the learned.

SENT TO HEIDELBERG.

Philip Melancthon has passed through two years of preparatory schooling at Pforzheim, and by the care of his mother and friends is transferred to the Academy of Heidelberg. The *Academy*, we say; for as yet this was the designation of many seats of learning which we now call universities. Heidelberg, the native city of his grandfather, Nicholas, was famous for its Academy, founded in the year 1386, and respectable as the abode of Princes and learned men; and they sent him thither under a persuasion that his inclination, as well as talent, would lead him eventually to a Professor's chair. Soon he conciliated the good-will of his fellow-students, and attracted the attention of his tutors, by an extremely affable disposition, and an aptitude to teach far beyond his age. And so zealous was he in the pursuit of knowledge, that his example roused general emulation.

Again happy in the choice of lodgings, he lived with Pallas, an eminent scholar, of whom we find little to be told, except that he was learned, virtuous, and beneficent.

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The name of Pallas, indeed, might have been forgotten ; but it is perpetuated in the praises of his guest, who ever spoke of him in terms of gratitude and admiration. The Court and the Academy made good use of his wisdom in their counsels for many years ; and when he died, in the year 1512, his body was honourably interred in the cathedral of Heidelberg, and an epitaph from the pen of Melancthon describes his excellencies :—

“ Consilio pollens, largus rerum, ore disertus
Doctor erat Pallas, hæc tumulatus humo.”

“ Weighty in counsel, wealthy, eloquent, and learned.”

Fifteen years was certainly a very little age for one employed by the Academy to write an epitaph for the tomb of such a person ; and we therefore are the less surprised to find that the writer has already been a year in charge of two sons of the Count Lewis of Löwenstein, and on terms of intimacy with Peter Sturm of Strasburg, and his brother James, young noblemen of reputation for learning and integrity.

Before he has completed his fourteenth year, Melancthon wins the introductory degree of Bachelor of Arts, and already aims at meriting the title of Master. Three years' hard study, however, does not satisfy all the authorities that the superior title can be conferred on one so young. Like the directors of most elder institutions, they are addicted to a conservation of lesser usages not always consistent with higher interests, although always intended to subserve them. They are inexorable. The climate of Heidelberg seems unhealthy. The aspiring youth grows feverish. The stimulus of literary honours can be no longer felt ; and he resolves to seek a purer atmosphere, and a more liberal spirit.

As to the standard of learning at Heidelberg in those days, Melancthon himself shall speak. “ When yet a boy,” he says, “ I was sent to this Academy, where, as nothing was *publicly* taught the youth except that garrulous dialectic and a particle of physics, as I had learnt to compose verses, I began with a sort of puerile avidity to read the poets, and, of course, I added to the reading of the poets that of histories and fables. This habit gradu-

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ally led me to the old authors. From them I gathered *words*, indeed; but there was no one to give me the least instruction as to style, and we lads used to pick up whatever came to hand, but especially what was newest, such as the writings of Politian," (a Florentine of the fifteenth century,) "and others of the same kind. My compositions, therefore, took their colour thence, and rather told of those harsh and horrid writers, than exhibited the elegance and purity of the ancients." *

Yet Philip strove to philosophize; and the effort led him quickly to perceive that in Heidelberg there was little to be learnt; that the masters themselves did not understand what they presumed to teach. Groping as in the dark, they perceived no relation between their profitless vocation and the business of the commonwealth, nothing to unite the school and the church. He therefore began to think for himself, and to consider what practical application for his knowledge could be devised.

The truth was, that he carried the lights of Wessel and Reuchlin, just then gleaming through the intellectual darkness of Europe, into an Academy that perpetuated the blindness of the fourteenth century. A youth of the sixteenth was disgusted at the stupidity of Doctors. No wonder that he felt his own superiority, and, half-sickened with disgust, resolved to look for masters capable of teaching, and for men who could appreciate his merits.

REMOVES TO TUBINGEN.

Tubingen offered this advantage. The institution was modern, and its policy more comprehensive and generous. Only thirty-six years before this time, Count Eberhard, afterwards Duke of Wurtemberg, had founded it at great expense, amidst the general enthusiasm that distinguished the early revival of learning. The nobler spirit of that time gave character to the whole course of study at Tubingen, which advanced at equal pace with the progress of literature and incipient science. The kindly spirit of the founder, too, survived in the men whom he

* Epist. Ph. Melanct. quæ prefixa est editioni primæ operum ipsius, A.D. 1542.

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had gathered from various parts of Germany, and his name was had in reverence.

Of that worthy Prince the praises were high. It was related of him that when about to establish the Academy, and a foreigner, whom he had employed to erect the buildings, asked him in what part of the principality he wished to have them situated, he answered, "All things else are trifling to me, nay, less than trifling, so long as I can boast of one comfort that this country yields me. And this is, that, wherever I may chance to be, alone, and with not so much as one servant to attend me, and wish a lodging, I can enter the house of any one of my people, lay my head safely in his bosom, and fall asleep there without care." Camerarius, who relates this anecdote, says that he had heard of Duke Eberhard giving utterance to the same noble boast in a company of Princes, where each was extolling the peculiar advantages and beauties of his dominions.

Theologians were there, of high repute; lawyers, of undoubted eminence; Professors of humanities and philosophy, renowned throughout all Germany. Of course, their elevation must have been estimated by comparison with lowlier brethren in such Academies as the dark-aged Heidelberg.

The new comer rejoiced himself in congenial society, formed friendships, gave scope to his poetical genius, and, as he glanced at something like a university of wisdom, believed it possible to make that wisdom all his own. He heard the theologians lecture,—and the physicians,—and the lawyers. Their books he scanned, he braved the depths of a fantastic theology, an astrological medicine, and a cramped and uncertain law: he promised himself mastery of all, and began to consider how to turn the whole to good account.

Soon he is made Master of Arts, youth notwithstanding. Eleven candidates presented themselves at the same time, some of mature age, and some even old men; but when the list came out, Philip Melancthon's name stood *first!*

Now his mind settled on a favourite study. His parents, as we have seen, were pious, according to the

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dim light they had; and an affectionate remembrance of a departed father and a tender mother, both of them superstitious, yet sincere, disposed this young man to dive into the realities of theology, just as he had been sifting the puerilities of other studies, and catching a prospect of something in them far more worthy than most of his masters could imagine.

The substance of theological teaching was not then sought in the sacred Scriptures, but consisted of certain obscure, thorny, and intricate questions. Speculations the most nugatory wearied minds that their subtilty bewildered. But Melancthon now applied himself to search out and embrace the truth, and reduce it to a clearer form of doctrine.

It was observed that he frequently carried a book with him to church, and read it at the time of saying mass. But when some one observed that it was rather larger than the Missals generally used there, evil-minded persons spread a whisper that Philip was amusing himself with some writings ill suited to such time and place. The truth was, that he had obtained a copy of the Holy Bible, recently printed at Basil by Froben, in a small type. From that time he gave himself to the perusal of this book, continued the sacred study to the end of his life without ever wearying, and such a volume he ever afterwards carried, and took it into every public assembly.

STUDIES AND LABOURS.

Naclerus,* Professor of Canon Law in the University of Tubingen, had laboured in the compilation of a chronicle of memorable events, beginning at the creation, and brought down to his own time. Thomas Anshelm, a printer of the city, also committed his reputation to the same volume; for in those days printers did not mechanically reduce to type the manuscripts committed to their hands without estimating their merits, and sharing in the glory or dishonour of the works. In this case, perhaps, the author felt that in so large a collection of dates and

* Greek again; *Ναύκληρος* being substituted for a German word signifying "ship-master."

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facts there must be many errors; and, before it went to press, Melancthon was employed to revise it thoroughly. It was a heavy folio, and the industrious and learned editor went far beyond revision; for he re-arranged, re-composed, and added, so far as necessary. Such a labour, instead of being a mere literary drudgery, as many seemed to think, required the effort of a mind already habituated to historical research, and capable of a most arduous and instructive exercise, the verification of dates, which is, indeed, the soul of history. Melancthon was well fitted to undertake the service; and he performed it so well, that Nauclerus had the praise of producing a chronicle more accurate than any that preceded. This praise is due to Melancthon; and I cannot help regarding the occupation which some have passed by lightly, or have represented to be but a waste of time and energy, as part of the signally providential preparation of the master-mind that was to prove its energies in the arena of theological and ecclesiastical controversy.

To catch at every incident, and hold it up as an instance of special providence, would betray equal folly and presumption; but I cannot help venturing to ask attention to the fact, that the poetical youth of Pforzheim, the young dramatist who employed the whole school to play his piece, the enthusiastic linguist, whose very proficiency as a classical scholar tended rather to beguile him into minute logomachies, while his imagination was exalted by the reading of the poets, was induced to bend his powers to the severer toil of historical research, and habituate himself to elicit the truth by the key and the test of chronological comparison.

I therefore would presume to think that, so far from giving himself to a mere servile drudgery in the employ of Anshelm, Melancthon was now acquiring the power of discrimination between fable and history, between fact and falsehood, which was so soon to render him eminent in the service of religion. Let me be permitted, then, to express a humble persuasion that, in this period of his life, the hand of God is to be distinctly recognised.

The confidence of Nauclerus in the learning and fidelity of this editor is apparent in the fact that, until his

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departure from Tübingen, Melancthon revised all the writings that passed through that press.

During nearly all the six years of our doctor's residence in this city, his friend Reuchlin was in conflict with the Dominicans, and with the theologists of Cologne, concerning the study of Hebrew, and the manner of dealing with Hebrew books. He marked the progress of the controversy with a watchful eye and a thoughtful heart; and, reading the living history daily written before him, learned to admire the calm, dignified patience, the mildness, and forbearance of his venerated patron, and generally to avoid the levity and vituperative witticisms that the "obscure men," as they called themselves, thought proper to employ in his defence.* At this time Melancthon sometimes visited Reuchlin at Stuttgart, and Reuchlin Melancthon at Tübingen, for friendly consultation; while the latter used the influence he was already able to command, in order to preserve the persecuted Hebraist from the malice of Inquisitors.†

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Notwithstanding the obscure drudgery of a corrector of the press, as it pleases some to estimate his learned labours in editing the works of Nauclerus, this young corrector acquired a high character among the first scholars of the day. Erasmus, one of the most eminent of them, and certainly one of the most courtly in his tastes, a familiar correspondent of Princes, spoke of him, when he had not yet passed his twentieth year, in language of admiring commendation.‡ "Of Melancthon,"

* Ulric Hutten, and some others, vexed the Monks with sarcastic and ludicrous letters, under the general title of "Epistolæ obscurorum Virorum."

† A scrupulous critic might demur to the mention of Inquisitors in Germany, where the Inquisition had no tribunal, nor any open jurisdiction. He might equally object to speak of Inquisitors in England, or the United States of America. But the fact is, that the Roman Congregation has always had *corresponding Inquisitors* in every country.

‡ Seckendorf quotes many passages quite as laudatory from the letters of Erasmus. (Comment. de Lutheran., lib. I., sect. 16.)

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he says, "I think most highly, and entertain the most brilliant hopes. (*Sentio præclarè et spero magnificè.*) May Christ grant that youth to survive us long! He will quite outshine Erasmus."

At a Diet of the orders of the Roman empire, convened by Maximilian I. at Augsburg in the year 1518, among the personages present were Frederic, Elector of Saxony, and Martin Luther. The Elector had founded an Academy, or University, at Wittenberg, and, seeing it rising into fame, devoted himself to its advancement with extraordinary earnestness. Luther had opened his controversy with the Church of Rome, in opposition to the sellers of indulgences, the year before, and was then protected by the Emperor and the Diet from the vengeance of the Pope. Luther occupied the chair of theology in the University of Wittenberg, and was, therefore, intimately concerned in the welfare of the University. They thought that this would be promoted if learned men could be found to teach Greek and Hebrew there; and the Elector wrote to Reuchlin, requesting him to recommend suitable persons.

After naming some for Hebrew, out of whom a choice might be made, Reuchlin told Frederic that he had a friend, somewhat distantly related, whom he should not lose without great reluctance; but would give him up to serve the Elector, although he had already refused him to Ingoldstadt. This was "Maister Philipp Schwartz-erd."

This offer the Elector at once accepted, and in his reply made honourable mention of George Schwartzerd the armorer, Philip's father, whom he had himself well known. Reuchlin strongly advised his young friend to accept the appointment, and observed that the proposed change would certainly tend to raise his reputation.

No time was lost. He soon disengaged himself from Tubingen, took horse, and set out for Wittenberg, now to be the centre of the Reformation. Applauses and regrets followed him, the Academy of Tubingen confessing, that in his departure it lost an ornament, and was deprived of inestimable services.

Respectful hospitality awaited him in every resting-

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place, and at Nuremberg and Leipsic, especially, he formed some life-long friendships. His serene and quiet cheerfulness attracted the attention of his hosts; and the carelessness of innovation on antiquated customs, that was to characterize his future life, must have appeared, perhaps unconsciously to himself, in his familiar communications.

An amusing incident occurred at Leipsic, where the College of the University honoured its guest with a ceremonious dinner. Dish came up after dish, and at the appearance of each some grave scholastic rose and delivered a set speech to the Greek Professor elect of Wittenberg. Naturally urbane, the honoured guest also rose, and made an extemporaneous acknowledgment of the first. The second dish necessitated a second speech, and a second time the Grecian tried his power of improvisation; but not without a sensation of discomfort at finding that power tested so severely amidst a company so sublimely grave. The third dish boded a third exertation, and a third sage actually delivered the fruit of elaborate premeditation. Melancthon paused a second or so, while silence held the expectant academicians, and, not knowing how often the ordeal might be repeated, he threw a gently sarcastic smile around, and once more broke the silence:—"I beseech you, men most famous, suffer me to hear all your orations, and then I will answer them all at once; for I have not come prepared, at the spur of the moment, to deliver so many speeches couched in the variety which yours demand." This put an end to that egregious table-pomp.

Arrived at Wittenberg, he conciliated the favour and admiration of all the University, whither an unexampled multitude of students crowded in from all parts of Germany. For his part, he was ready to discharge every duty with exactness, and, at the same time, with skill and genius. A good Grecian, Richard Crocus, formerly of Leipsic, had brought the study of Greek into considerable favour: but Melancthon had an exquisitely accurate method of teaching grammar; his lessons were clear beyond comparison, and his readings enriched with such opulence of learned illustration, that students and

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listeners thronged his lecture-room, and Wittenberg wondered at the fascination thus exerted by a young man of twenty-one.

The secret of all this lay in his genuine love of knowledge and of labour, a thirsting after excellence, and an incredible fixedness of purpose. It was not hope of higher dignity, nor craving after wealth, nor passion for praise; but calm and unwavering perseverance in the career he had chosen to pursue. So strong was this quality, and so high his native talent, that he outshone all the accredited scholars whom the Elector had collected in the University, poured a new light upon the scant rudiments of learning, and, by his own lovely wisdom, charmed away the dread of study. His disciples were all cheerful, all willing. No one feared him, none distrusted his impartiality. To his elders and superiors he showed studious respect; to his equals he rendered offices of unconstrained and sweetly-familiar kindness; to others he delighted in doing service. Poor students he taught and assisted in every possible way. Every one he made his friend, and enjoyed the singular happiness of exemption from the annoyances of enmity, dislike, or envy. Already he won the love, and was honoured with the reverence, of all persons of every rank.

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Before the innovations of Melancthon, Aristotle was the supreme authority at Wittenberg. In his books of dialectic, known as the *Organon*, the Stagirite treated a multitude of subjects, but left them in obscurity and confusion. Yet the sages who professed to guide the studies of youth, held the writings of Aristotle in greater veneration than the word of God; and both the teachers and the taught laboured in vain to strike a gleam of light out of the darkness. Ignorant of any true method of learning languages or arts, their powers dwindled away in the stint of perpetual infancy. Neither for literary composition nor for oral eloquence could they acquire any considerable ability. To throw light on Aristotle, or to escape from their own darkness by the light of a pure philosophy, was

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equally impossible. Hence it came to pass that, if the fountain of Aristotle was not clear, the academic streams were black. Many masters arose to proffer their skill for the explication of Aristotle, and obtained followers for a time. The favourite scholastic at Wittenberg just now was one Tartareus: his wisdom commanded the homage of the whole school, and on his book some wit wrote this epigram:—

“Tartara quod vincis et cæcæ nubila mentis,
Nomen conveniens ergo, libelle, tenes.”

And, indeed, the obscurity of the book seemed to vie with that of Tartarus. Yet this was the manual with which students of philosophy at Wittenberg were doomed to be ever learning, never to attain to the knowledge of the truth.*

A young man, just in his twenty-second year, came from Tübingen, to disentangle these intricacies. At his first appearance, the Doctors were not entirely persuaded of his ability to sustain the dignity of his office,—much less to raise it beyond every other professorial chair in Europe,—and could not promise any great results to the University. He was, as Luther said, “a slender person, of almost contemptible appearance.”†

Four days after his arrival, he delivered a Latin oration to the University on the Improvement of Studies of Youth, (“De Corrigendis Adolescentiæ Studiis,”) in a style altogether new to them. Simple, chaste, unassuming, yet bold, as became one whose duty was to dispel delusion, as well as remove ignorance, he astonished and charmed the audience. After paying honour to illustrious names of higher antiquity, he traced the declension of letters, arts, and philosophy, until they fell into the state of barbarism that was then to be deplored.

Thence he proceeded to laud the munificence of the Elector Duke of Saxony, founder of the Academy, and to point out the course of study which he should advise the youth of Wittenberg to follow. Greek and Latin

* Jacobi Bruckeri *Historia Critica Philosophiæ*. Lipsiæ. Tom. iv., p. 277.

† Seckendorf, *Hist. Lutheran.*, lib. i., sect. 16.

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classics and history, with a more correct method of philosophizing, were to engage their labours, yet not exclusively. At this point Melancthon could not stop, nor did he heed the prohibitions of biblical teaching which his Church had multiplied, and which the Academies respected. He knew that, in Paris, for example, no master presumed to open the sacred volume; and had seen abhorrence of scriptural teaching carried so far by the Bishops of Misnia, in a statute printed at Leipsic a few years before, as to forbid "the Rectors of schools and their associates to explain the books of holy Scripture, either publicly or privately." * But the time was past for suppressing the truth of God.

He, therefore, closed his oration by earnestly exhorting them to give their mind to sacred studies. Above all others, these pursuits demand a careful mind and unwearyed application. They are as a Divine perfume shed on human learning; and for gaining proficiency in them, the Holy Spirit must be guide, and assiduous culture the companion. Thus wrote Synesius to Herculanus, that he should make use of a fruitful philosophy to advance to the knowledge of that which is Divine, even as the Tyrians brought their precious metals to adorn the house of God. "The fountains of theology," he says, "are partly Hebrew and partly Greek, whereas the Latins could only drink humbly of their own streams." In these originals, he affirms, the beauty and propriety of the text are to be unfolded, and its true meaning shown clear as in the light of day. Yet he would not have them to linger over the letter only, but, casting away frigid glosses, concordances, discordances, and other clogs of genius, follow the evidence of things revealed.

"And when," said he, "we can bring up our minds to those fountains, we shall begin to know Christ, His commandment will be made clear to us, and we shall delight ourselves with that nectar of Divine wisdom. But when we gather spikenard in the vineyards of Engaddi, the spouse will come bounding over the mountains, and over the hills exulting, will bring you into the palaces of

* Quoted from the Acts and Documents of Lœscher, by Gerdea. *Evang. Renovat.*, tom. i., p. 30.

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Eden, anoint you with fragrance that cannot rest on the minds of the impure, and exalt you into seats of honour. Made members of Christ, we live, we breathe, we flourish, we gaze on Sion, and, veiled in silence, we fall down and worship toward Salem. This is the effect of heavenly wisdom. Therefore, let us hold it fast in purity, no more polluted by our idle quibblings."* Then he quoted the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus, descanted on the great religious benefit to be expected from the revival of learning, and closed his oration without the slightest taint of superstition on the one hand, or the most remote allusion to ecclesiastical corruptions on the other. He took his audience with him to the highest ground, sure that, if they would use a sure and sanctified philosophy as a manuduction into the knowledge of Christianity itself, gathering that philosophy from its incorrupt and only source, the word of God, he should have prepared a host of teachers for the generation then to come. This was the Gospel, not covert, but exhibited in academic eloquence.

The very next day Luther wrote thus to Spalatine, Secretary of the Elector of Saxony: "He delivered an oration, on the fourth day after his arrival, altogether so erudite and terse, with such acceptance and admiration of all, that you cannot now imagine with how good reason you recommended him to us. We soon gave up the opinion we had formed of him from his stature and appearance, and with delight and wonder see the thing itself in him." And not content to render empty praise, he begs the Secretary to endeavour to get a higher salary for the new Professor, hoping that Pfeffinger, as usual, will not try to draw the Elector's purse-strings tighter, but consider that, if he is not made sure of at Wittenberg, they will get him away for Leipsic. And, in the same week, he repeats his testimony, that "Philip is a most learned Grecian, a most erudite and cultivated man; that his auditory overflows; and that all, but especially the theologians, the highest, the middling, and the lowest, all are bent by him to the study of Greek."† Luther himself

* *Declamationum D. Ph. Melancthonis, &c. Argentorati, tom. i., p. 27.*

† *Seckendorf, Hist. Lutheran., lib. i., sect. 16.*

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was not excepted. He said that he could desire no better master; and in his writings afterwards confessed himself, in similar language, the pupil of Melancthon.

A like simplicity characterized the Wittenbergers. In their society this young man was not scowled into a corner because of his youth, neither did any airs of self-importance in himself provoke his elders to remind him of it. They did not calculate from the birth-day of the prodigy of learning, eloquence, and wisdom, but wisely accepted his gifts for the benefit and good fame of the rising University; and when the Emperor Maximilian I. died, in January, 1519, Philip Melancthon was chosen to pronounce the funeral oration.

The oration was elegant and full of patriotism. Besides the garniture of erudition which custom demanded, but which was meted out with moderation that indicated a fine sense of propriety, the orator pronounced an estimate of his character as a pacific Prince beyond what the facts of history appear to warrant. At this early stage of his experience, the pursuits of academic life had not fitted him for a discriminative review of the career of a statesman; and he does not seem to have considered that it was the jealousies of Germany that had restrained the martial aspirations of the Emperor, who was very far from being a pacific Prince.

On another point he expressed, no doubt, the prevalent feeling of his countrymen in regard to Rome. The rising controversy that must presently engage our attention did not suggest language in this oration bearing explicit allusion to the struggle between Maximilian and Pope Julius II., to the entire history of the conflict between the Empire and the Papacy, and especially to the turmoil of battles, treaties, and breaches of treaty, that had kept that generation in alarm. "The Popes," he affirmed, "have never failed to sow the seeds of war among the Germans;" and he attributed it to the prudence of the late Emperor that he did not allow himself to be ensnared by the Pontiff.

The conclusion, only, of the oration shows that

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Melancthon has yet to sit at the feet of Luther for theology, as Luther sits at his for Greek. He prays Christ "that the soul of Maximilian may feel profited by the pious prayers of the Church." Yet the time is near when the pen of Melancthon will not yield in clearness to any in exposing the folly of those who make prayers for the dead.

A letter from Erasmus of Rotterdam is extant, to show that at that very time our orator was in correspondence with the most accomplished scholar of his age. The letter is one written in reply, in a style affectionate and dignified. "Be assured, my Philip," he writes, "that I love you heartily, and uncommonly delight in your most happy genius." He bestows some very poetic praise on a hymn he has written, and a preface, admiring its firmness and spirit, bold as becomes a young man and a German. "But if you will suffer Erasmus to be your monitor, I should like you to give greater care to promote good learning than to attack its persecutors. They deserve, indeed, to be torn limb from limb by all good men; but, if I am not mistaken, we shall make better progress by the milder way. Besides, we must be careful to appear superior to them, not only in eloquence, but in modesty and gentleness of manners."

From the lips of Erasmus, recollecting that he was no less notorious as a temporiser than eminent as a man of learning, one might almost hesitate even to take wise counsel; yet let Erasmus be forgotten, and this advice, inestimably precious as it is, never be thrown away. Of Luther he already speaks with the caution of a courtier: "Every one here approves the life of Martin Luther; but, as to his doctrine, opinions differ. I have not yet read his books. He has put forth some good admonitions; but I much wish they were as happy as they are free.....Farewell, my most learned Melancthon: strive hard, not only to equal, but to surpass, the best hope that Germany conceives of your genius and your piety." And he postscribes a fatherly hint: "But endeavour to moderate your studies, that you may last long to help the cause of letters; for I hear that you have not an adamantine constitution. And at least take

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care of your life for this one reason, that you may not gratify those barbarians. Again farewell." *

By a friendly letter of Melancthon's, of but a few days earlier date,† we find that he is applying himself anew to the study of Hebrew. He is reading the Psalms, and begs his friend to help him that some day they may overturn הליצים מושב "the chair of those scorners."

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Speculations concerning the state of the departed, and the region of the unseen world, where they await the final judgment, leading to the invention of a scheme of Divine government over them different from all that is revealed in holy Scripture, had grown up through many centuries. At first the speculators were satisfied with such names as are to be found in the inspired writings; but when the simplicity of this language did not satisfy the demands of an exuberant invention, they borrowed compound words from Greek, and actually adopted, for descriptions of that mysterious world of separate spirits, the fables of Greek and Latin poets. Then their inventive imagination, having wandered away from the only standard of revealed truth, condescended to imposture; and as men had come to believe in a second revelation, communicated through ascetics and enthusiasts, dreamers arose, who professed to have gone down into the region of the departed, and witnessed their suffering of retributive pains and testing fires. As yet the dreamers abstained from naming that process,‡ neither did they distinctly or uniformly state

* Louvaine, April 22d, 1519.

† Epist. Ph. Melancthonis. Lugd. Batav., 1647. P. 408.

‡ By way of example: The Ecclesiastical History of the English People, by Bede, with the free but invaluable version in Anglo-Saxon by our good King Alfred, exhibits the exact state of popular belief in this country in the time of the royal translator. In this work there is mention of two such dreamers. The first is a householder somewhere in Northumberland, who sickened, and one evening died. The room being full of watchers, towards morning he came to life again, and sat upright in bed, to the consternation of them all, who ran away, and left his good wife alone to hear that he had risen from the dead. Not long after, he went into the monastery of

whether it was penal or purificatory. But the visions were told over and over through long tradition, written

Mailross, and there edified the credulous with an account of what he pretended to have seen. His description is too near that of Virgil, in his descent of Æneas into Orcus, for the imitation not to be detected. He does not call the place purgatory, for the name was not yet thought of; but repeats the words of his guide, “‘This,’ he said, ‘is not that hell which thou tellest and thinkest. (niſ ȝif cƿæð he ƿeo hell ƿƿa ȝu taloſt ȝ ƿeneȝt.) Neither is the blissful part of this region heaven.’” Before leaving the place, his guide thus explained the doctrine:—

“‘Knowest thou what all these things are that thou hast seen?’ I answered him, ‘No.’ And he said, ‘That valley which thou sawest, horrid with burning flames and chilling frosts, is the place where are *examined* and *punished* the souls of those who delayed to confess and to put away their sins, but at length, *in the article of death*, they fled to confession and repentance, and thus left the body; and because they confessed and repented in death, *they shall all come to heaven in doom’s day*. And the prayers of the living, and alms, and fastings, and *especially the celebration of mass-songs*, help many, and they are delivered before doom’s day. And know thou that the flaming and stinking pit that thou hast seen is the mouth of hell torment, (helle tinteƿeƷer muð,) in which whosoever once falleth can never be delivered thence. But that blossom-bearing place where thou sawest those happy youths so bright, is that where their souls are received who quit the body with good works, indeed, but are not so perfect as to deserve to be admitted forthwith into the kingdom of heaven; but, on doom’s day, they shall all enter into the vision of Christ, and joys of the kingdom of heaven. For, whosoever are perfect, in every word and work and thought, as soon as they leave the body shall come into the kingdom of heaven.’”

Alfred, after Bede, in an exposition of the articles of faith, says, that our Lord “of his own will suffered death, hanging upon the cross, and by his voluntary death released us from eternal death; his body was buried, and he lorded over *the first hell*, (on ȝam ƿƿiſte helle ȷehenȷode,) and afterwards arose on the third day from the dead. He went to heaven.” *Hell*, we note, when used absolutely in Anglo-Saxon, neither means purgatory nor the grave.

There was a *second* dreamer, one Fursius, who came from Ireland to enlighten our English ancestors. He repeated the same fiction, saying that he had seen this purgatorial world in a vision; and was highly patronized, both in England and France. (See Whelock’s Bede. Cambridge, 1664. Pages 413—417, 425, 209—215.)

These examples are provincial, it is true; but they are the fruit of Roman invention, and show the doctrine which the Priests propagated all over countries occupied by the Latin Church. They serve, also to illustrate the means employed for propagation.

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in books, and even embodied in authorized legends of the Latin Church.

The Greek Church, however, did not agree in the reception of this fable. Some of her fathers had taken the first step, or, by the poetry of their language, had seemed to take it; but it was left to superstition to make its own way by popular contagion. At length, at the Council of Florence, in the year 1439, a sort of assent was extorted from a few spirit-broken and mercenary Greeks; and *for the first time* the Church of Rome made a formal declaration of belief in purgatory, which thus became a new article of faith.

Even then the scheme of selling indulgences for the liberation of souls from purgatory, and making the new article a means of revenue, was not carried into execution. Alexander VI. was the first Pope who sold indulgences for the dead, as his predecessors had sold them for the living. And it is most remarkable that this traffic began *within the memory of Luther*, at the Jubilee of the year 1500. The practice was no less offensive to multitudes than it was novel; and the renewal of such an effort to raise money, at least before the return of Jubilee, was excessively imprudent. If Leo X. had allowed a few more years to pass away, the attempt might have been successful; Luther would not, probably, have been provoked to a controversy; nor would the Reformation have arisen to shake the Church of Rome to her foundations.

It is enough if we catch the clue of events, in order to appreciate the nature of the great controversy that Melancthon makes his own, soon after coming to Wittenberg. We therefore recall, with the utmost brevity, occurrences that may already be familiar to the reader.

Julius II., not less notorious than his predecessor Alexander VI., nor less ambitious, pursued a course altogether opposite. Alexander wished to create a new kingdom in Italy for the aggrandisement of his family, and, in that view, often encouraged foreigners to come into Italy, hoping to take advantage of the confusion, and gather fragments of the wreck for Cæsar Borgia and his

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descendants. Julius, on the contrary, set his heart on driving foreigners out of Italy, subduing discontented states, and restoring to the Church whatever it had lost. After fighting at the head of his army, and acquiring the reputation of a General, brave even to ferocity, he resolved to erect a monument of his pontificate that future generations might admire.

Michael Angelo and Bramanti, although rivals, united to persuade their patron to pull down the old church of St. Peter, and raise a vast temple on an antique model. Julius caught the idea, encouraged the artists, and, in spite of the loud remonstrances of people of all ranks, but especially of the Cardinals, caused half of the old church, chief temple of the Popedom, to be pulled down, and himself laid the foundation-stone of the present cathedral of St. Peter. Here was created a new necessity. The demolished edifice could not be recovered. The new one, although scarcely begun, must be completed. The structure must be equal, in architectural excellence, in size, and in artistic wealth, to the pride of its projectors, and worthy, as they were wont to say, of the metropolis of Christendom, of *the city*.

Every one knows that Leo X., son of Lorenzo the Magnificent of Florence, a devotee to the arts, and a man of most refined ambition, undertook to complete the work. But he had not enough money for the accomplishment of so grand an enterprise. He therefore offered forgiveness of sins to every one who would purchase this grace; and also release from purgatory, for as many departed sinners as their survivors might please to deliver by buying certificates of mercy. To make sure of the returns, he sent persons into all countries, under the name of *questors*, who sold the tickets of indulgence to the best possible advantage. The salesmen in Germany and Switzerland were as devoid of shame as even Cæsar Borgia or his father could have wished. In Germany, the salesman Tetzl provoked the public opposition of Martin Luther in the year 1517; and the controversy that begun on the single article of purgatory—an article, as I have just noticed, but very lately innovated—was going on from one point of belief or superstition to another, and threatening to dispute, if

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not also to overthrow, the whole system of Romish doctrine.

THE LEIPSIC DISPUTATION.

John Eck, Professor of Theology at Ingoldstadt, a clever scholastic and well-trained controversialist, who had obtained great celebrity as a public disputant, challenged Andrew Carlstadt, Archdeacon of Wittenberg, and Professor of Theology in that University, to meet him in debate. The fuel for his controversial fire was to be some theses of Carlstadt concerning indulgences, which had lost favour at Wittenberg. Eck, as it would appear, fixed the place, applying to George, Duke of Saxony, for permission to meet his antagonist in Leipsic. The heads of that University reluctantly consenting, Eck and Carlstadt met in the great hall of the castle of Leipsic on June 27th, 1519, in presence of the Duke, his Councillors, Magistrates, and the Doctors and Bachelors of the Academy, with a multitude of persons from neighbouring towns. Luther, to show respect to his friend, who was older than himself, and who deserved support in such a cause as Professor of Theology, went to Leipsic with him. Melancthon, for similar reasons, attended Luther; but these two went only as private persons.

After the settlement of rules of debate, and a protestation by both parties that nothing should be established against the sentence and teaching of "the Catholic Church," Eck attacked Carlstadt, Carlstadt replied to Eck; the former stronger in scholastic and rhetorical weapons, the latter armed with some truths that during the last two years had gained a firm hold upon his understanding and his conscience.

Warm and wordy must have been the debate, protracted, with little intermission, through sixteen or eighteen days, with two sittings daily; and it is of little importance to compare the reports of the combatants, and estimate the share of ability displayed by each. They strove to resolve knotty questions touching human will and Divine grace; but they also handled matters more tangible to the men of Wittenberg,—purgatory, indulgences, pardons, penance, and the primacy of the Pope.

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Luther assisted Carlstadt in the intervals of debate; and Melancthon sat with unruffled calmness, taking notes, and each day preparing to give Carlstadt the benefit of his reflections for the next meeting. Luther, however, could not keep silence, but allowed himself to be drawn into the controversy. He used his best caution; but, notwithstanding a bull of excommunication from Leo X., impending over all gainsayers of indulgences, he uttered many things which would have drawn the fulmination down upon himself, if the German atmosphere had not been already unfavourable to the transmission of that fire. He and Melancthon, obeying truth rather than worldly prudence, almost broke down the bridge that had hitherto carried them to and fro between Rome and Saxony; and Eck, by making known to the Pope the sayings of Luther, happily accelerated its utter demolition.

As for Melancthon, he plunged at once into the depths of theological study, feeling the importance of the questions discussed at Leipsic, and foreseeing conclusions far more grave than anything merely relating to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, or the independence of Bishops. And as the voices of Eck and Carlstadt clashed in the castle of Leipsic, a trumpet was marshalling the hosts that have not ceased to do battle from that day to this, nor ever will cease until truth has won her everlasting victory.

At this time, too, the Greek Professor, not being a Priest, was a free man. Proof of his happy liberty was given one day, when, if the tale be true, a paper appeared on the door of his lecture-room:—

“ A studiis hodie facit otia grata Philippus,
Nec vobis Pauli dogmata sacra leget.”

The students translated the verses accurately enough by remaining away for that one day, while Melancthon intermitted his lecture on some part of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and was united in wedlock, according to God's ordinance, to an excellent young lady of one of the first families in Wittenberg. Her name was Catherine Crapt. It is pleasant to read his own brief eulogy of this lady, when announcing the marriage to a friend: “Both in mind and manners, she is such an one as I should have

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desired God to give me." Camerarius describes her as "a very religious woman, most affectionate to her husband, a very assiduous and diligent housekeeper, liberal and beneficent to all, attentive to the poor, both giving them charity, and asking it for them." A kind wife, no doubt, but not only sometimes forgetful of the limit of her husband's income, in giving to the poor, but by applications and entreaties on behalf of the poor to others, pressing her calls on their benevolence unreasonably. She was also negligent in her provision for the table, and slovenly in her dress. But this mattered little to her husband, whose own dress was not remarkable for neatness.

No domestic blandishments withdrew Philip for a *second* day from his professorial duties. His lectures on the Epistle to the Romans were so good, and composed so carefully, that Luther printed them without his knowledge. To prepare his audience for their delivery, he first wrote and read an exhortation to the study of Christian doctrine.

As a young layman, it behoved him to avoid the style of pastoral authority. He would recommend his hearers to study the Pauline philosophy for themselves, and was not only conscious of inability to treat such a theme with the eloquence it demanded, but felt that, in advocating that sacred cause, he was acting with greater boldness than prudence. Yet the "Pauline doctrine" ought not to be familiar to Monks alone, or to "those scenic theologians," but to the multitude of Christian people. His peroration disclosed the purpose now matured at Wittenberg, to make the studies of the University subservient to the establishment of Christian doctrine; and breathes the earnestness and concentration of mind that gave power for the accomplishment of a great purpose.

"Young men! you who are inaugurated into Christ,* unless you are utterly careless of your own salvation, addict yourselves to this Pauline philosophy. Seek hence a form of Christian life. Seek hence your consolations.

* The inauguration to which he refers must have been their baptism.

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Seek hence the judgment you shall form of all things, Divine and human. For it is most important that young men should understand that there is nothing more ancient than Christian teaching, nor anything to be preferred before it, for prosperous advancement through human life. Indeed, it is impossible to order life aright, or pass it happily, unless you are instructed by the writings of St. Paul how to resist the snares of stubborn men, of Satan, and of the flesh. You might even despise all other learning; but that which this Apostle teaches you cannot pass over negligently, unless you have abandoned all hope of your own salvation."

A few strong words to Bishops, and some opportune advice to other Academies, close this address, which it is impossible to read without the liveliest admiration.*

THE POPE'S BULL BURNED.

While the rudiments of Gospel truth were taught at Wittenberg with a systematic diligence never attempted before the Leipsic disputation, Eck was in Rome, procuring an act of authority to crush those whom it was found impossible to silence; and he returned into Germany in October, 1520, invested with the dignity of Apostolic Legate, and bearing a bull from Pope Leo X., dated in the June preceding. It contained a condemnation of many propositions, extracted from the books of Luther, with a command to the author to retract them within sixty days, either sending the retraction in due form to Rome within that time, or, if he chose, appearing there with the paper in his hand. In the latter case, the Pope offered him a safe-conduct. Failing to obey, he would incur the greater excommunication, together with all the abettors of his contumacy.

Leaving this passage of history to be read in biographies of Luther, and histories of the Reformation, it is enough to say, that the appearance of Eck as bearer of this instrument completely frustrated his intention; for every one regarded the bull as his own, rather than the

* *Adhortatio ad Christianæ Doctrinæ per Paulum proditæ studium.* Phil. Melanch. *Declamat.*, tom. iii.

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Pope's, obtained by himself through revenge on the man whose doctrine he had been unable to disprove, and whose representative he had not been able to vanquish in open argument.

The Clergy and the Universities were divided; but public feeling generally was on the side of Luther and Wittenberg. Luther appealed to the Elector; but the Elector was absent at the coronation of the Emperor, where he might conceal, under the plea of many occupations, an unwillingness to accept the bull, or to commit himself prematurely to the controversy. As for Luther, he neither would nor could retract propositions which he believed to be true.

First, he wrote an appeal from the Pope to a Christian and free Council, and, on the 17th of November, 1520, delivered it to Notaries, in the presence of witnesses, in his own Augustinian monastery in Wittenberg; and, on the 28th day of the same month, repeated the appeal in a similar document, but considerably enlarged. In this writing he employed stronger, or, as some would say, more violent, language than he had ever used before, calling the Pope *tyrant, heretic, apostate, Antichrist, and proud contemner of Councils*.

This roughness in the style of Martin Luther, very dissimilar from that of his courteous, yet honest, friend Melancthon, it is customary to condemn. Even his best supporters thought it their duty to endeavour to smooth and soften him, as soon as he began to deliver his convictions with so great freedom of invective; and therefore we can scarcely pass it over without notice. Instead, however, of attempting to justify a defect which, after all, is far more tolerable than the feeble, insincere, and spiritless verbiage of many of his most contemptuous censors, we must let him answer for himself.

"I confess," he says, in a letter to Spalatin, "that I am too vehement. But I have to do with men who blaspheme Gospel truth,—with wolves, with persons who condemn me unheard, unadvised, untaught, and who heap on me and on the word of God the most atrocious criminations. If I were to speak of such without warmth, the very stones would cry out with indignation; but how

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much more one like myself, who am of a warm temper, use no very feeble style, nor can always keep within the bounds of modesty! But I wonder whence comes this new religion, that whatever one says against an adversary is called abuse. What think you of Christ? Was He a railer when He called the Jews an adulterous and perverse generation, a brood of vipers, hypocrites, children of the devil? Then Paul, when he calls them dogs, vain speakers, seducers, unlearned; and when he inveighs against false prophets as if he were beside himself, saying, 'O full of all subtilty and all mischief, child of the devil, enemy of all righteousness?' Why could not Paul have spoken blandly to this man, rather than thunder thus? Because one who is conscious of possessing the truth cannot have patience with the perverse and stubborn enemies of the truth."

And again: "I see that they all want me to be modest, especially my enemies, who, after all, are themselves the least modest of mankind. But I, if^b I am somewhat lacking in modesty, am at least plain and honest, and think that in this respect I excel them who treat me with consummate craftiness and untruth." *

Spalatin, who knew all parties, gave proof of satisfaction by immediately translating one of those vehement writings from Latin into German.

On Monday, the 10th day of December,† the intrepid reformer walked out of Wittenberg, accompanied by the Doctors of the University, the students, and the mass of the inhabitants, to perform a solemn act of secession from the Church of Rome, before the Papal threat of excommunication could be fulfilled.

A large pile of wood was raised, and on it he laid copies of the Canon Law of Gratian, the Decretals of the Popes, the Clementines and the Extravagants, that is to say, all the authoritative texts of the Popish law. On the top of these volumes he laid a copy of the bull against himself.

* Seckendorf. Hist. Lutheran., lib. i., sect. 31.

† There is a surprising diversity in regard to this date. Luther *himself* says, "auf Montag noch St. Nicolai im 1520 Jahr," which is the date given in the text. (Dr. Martin Luther's *Sämmtliche Werke*. Erlangen, 1838. Band xxiv., seit. 152.)

EARLY COUNSELS AND WRITINGS.

This done, he set fire to the pile, and as the faggots blazed exclaimed, "Because thou hast troubled the Lord's Holy One, thou shalt be burned in eternal fire." The spectators raised a great shout, saw the volumes reduced to ashes, and walked back into the city. At Leipsic, in spite of all that Duke George could do to the contrary, there was a similar demonstration.

Melancthon was present at the burning of the bull, and from that moment ceased to regard himself as a member of the Church of Rome.

EARLY COUNSELS AND WRITINGS.

While the storm of controversy raged on all sides, this indefatigable scholar applied himself to the study and exposition of theology. From his tranquil dwelling he sent forth apologetic writings on behalf, at once, of his friend Luther and of Christianity. The Doctors at Paris condemned the propositions that were already marked as heretical and impious at Rome; and he promptly issued "An Apology for Luther against the Decree of the Parisian Theologasters." To confute one Emser, who had written a book against Luther under a fictitious name, he also wrote a book under similar disguise: "The Answer of Didymus Faventinus to Thomas Placentinus." Both these writings are to be found in the collective editions of his works.

His counsels were sought, at this time, (A.D. 1521,) on a proposal of the Augustinian Monks for the abolition of private masses and other such practices at Wittenberg. In conjunction with five other persons, deputed by the University, he met the Monks, fully concurred in their purpose, and sent a report of their united conclusion to the Elector Frederic, recommending him not only to sanction the proposed reforms in Wittenberg, but in all other parts of Saxony. So far as Wittenberg was concerned, the Elector cordially gave sanction, and the work was done.

At that time Luther was shut up, under the ban of the empire, in the castle of the Wartburg, after the Diet of Worms; so that the first great innovation on established

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custom was made, not by him, but by others, and with the full consent of the proverbially cautious and even timorous Melancthon. On his return, therefore, he found no more private masses for souls in purgatory,—no more idols in the temples,—no more communion in one kind only,—no more auricular confession,—no more prayers to saints,—no more abstinence from meats by ecclesiastical command. Great was the exultation of Luther; yet, with no less prudence, he inculcated moderation on the more impetuous, and reminded them that the word of God, not the hatchet, must break down images.

In addition to advice given in private, Melancthon contributed to enlighten the public mind by writing an "Answer to an Instruction from the Court of Saxony, and Proposals concerning the Mass and the true Use of the Lord's Supper." In the same year is dated the first edition of the work, afterwards celebrated under the title of "Common-Places," but also known as the "Hypotheses Theologicæ." And in the next year and the year following annotations on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Romans and to the Corinthians, and some briefer notes on the Book of Genesis, came from his prolific pen.

Nor did he confine himself to this class of compositions, but gave play to his fancy in a satirical history of Alexander VI., under the whimsical title of "An Account of the Ass-Pope, a Monster found in the Tiber, at Rome, in the Year 1496."

FANATICISM.

The reforms at Wittenberg were the signal for an inevitably turbulent moral revolution; and no sooner were they known than Saxony was thrown into confusion by some fanatics who sprang up at Zwickau.

Controversy had arisen there in consequence of sermons delivered by some enlightened or half-enlightened Preachers, and it raged furiously among the populace. Violence was committed, and some of the most riotous were thrown into prison. Others, alarmed with the apprehension of suffering in like manner, if they remained in Zwickau, came to propagate their notions in Wittenberg,

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where they fancied that their new light might be permitted to shine more freely. The chief of these was one Nicholas Storck. He had appointed twelve poor men to be his disciples, and seventy-two apostles; but the strong hand of authority dispersed their apostolic college; and Nicholas, attended by two woollen-weavers, profoundly ignorant men, made his way to Wittenberg, and began to preach.

Melancthon went to hear them, and, instead of being disgusted with their folly, listened with amazement. They told wondrous tales. God, they said, had commanded them, with an audible voice, to go forth and preach. They held familiar colloquies with God! They foretold things to come! They were prophetic and apostolic men! Good Melancthon, last of men to deceive, yet not last to be deceived by any who could put on a garb of piety, listened with awe, and knew not how to describe the strange emotions that their discourses excited within him. Reasons, weighty reasons, coming to plead on behalf of the new prophets, bade him despise them not; "for that there were spirits of some kind in those men appeared by many arguments." Yet, as he said, "none but Martin could judge."

On the day of John the Evangelist (December 27th, 1521,) he addressed an earnest letter "to the most illustrious and most wise Prince, Duke Frederic, Elector of Saxony, Light of Israel, his most clement Lord," acknowledging all this, and praying that Luther might be permitted to return from the Wartburg; for none but he was competent to meet those men, and to him they constantly appealed. Carlstadt began to yield to the fascination, and Melancthon scrupled not to invite Storck to be his guest. He sat down and listened to his harangues, and narrated the wonders in a letter to Luther.

The Elector, paying great deference to Melancthon, and almost half disposed to think well of persons in whose presence so wise a man confessed himself to be touched with reverence, requested Melancthon and Amsdorf to come to the little town of Prettin, on the first day of the year 1522, where one of his Councillors asked them to explain fully the reasons of their application to

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the civil authority. Melancthon replied by stating what Storck had said concerning the disturbances at Zwickau, how the prophets had argued against the baptism of infants, and alleged Divine revelations in support of their opinions. There was need, he added, of the presence of Luther; for he was himself utterly unequal to the task of settling so grave a controversy. Storck, he said, quoted St. Augustine, to prove that there was nothing beyond ancient custom to be brought in favour of baptism as commonly administered; and Luther, it was understood, was not ignorant of this allegation. Frederic, therefore, as patron of the Church, was called upon to release Luther in this exigency. Amsdorf briefly answered that they had felt it right to submit a matter of so grave importance to the attention of the Elector.

On the day following, the Elector sent to tell them that he had expected to hear something far more important than what they communicated, and that they had better not hold any disputation on baptism, but consider how the credit of Wittenberg was impaired in consequence of the Leipsic disputation; since which, that University was reputed to be addicted to controversy. For his own part, as a layman, he knew not what to say: it did seem very extraordinary that those plebeians should be employed in a work that required such high pretensions; but, if it pleased God to make use of such persons, it would not be altogether without some good result.

Luther also answered Melancthon's letter, treating the prophets with the contempt they merited. "I do not approve of your timidity," said he, "although you are far my superior both in spirit and learning. And especially when they bear witness of themselves, they ought not to be heard; but, according to the counsel of St. John, the spirits should be tried. You are taking the advice of Gamaliel, and putting this matter off; but I hear of nothing that those men do which Satan might not also do, or even better. But do you, for my sake, put them on the proof of their vocation. For God never sent forth any one who was not either called of man, or accredited by miracles; no, not even His own Son. The Prophets of old had their right established by the prophetic law

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and order ; and ours is now disputed by men, and I utterly refuse to own them if they pretend to be called by bare revelation, since it did not please God even to speak to Samuel, except by making use of the authority of Eli. This, however, refers to the function of public teaching ; and then, when you try their spirit privately, you must ascertain whether they have undergone spiritual anguish, and a Divine birth, and death, and hell. But if you hear them talk blandly, calmly, devoutly, as they say, and religiously, even if they tell you they have been caught up into the third heaven, approve them not. For the sign of the Son of man is wanting, the sign of Him who is the only trier of Christians, the only searcher of spirits. Would you know the time, the place, the manner, of Divine discourses ? ‘ As a lion He broke all my bones ;’ and, ‘ I am cast out from before Thy presence ;’ and, ‘ My soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth near to hell.’ ‘ The Majesty,’ as they say, does not so speak immediately, as one man speaks to another ; for ‘ no man can see His face, and live.’”

But Melancthon could not unveil the imposture, if, indeed, he could detect it. The prophets went on unchecked at Wittenberg ; and he knew of no earthly help, except by the return of Luther. At length, March 7th, 1522, Luther did return, although not with consent of the Elector, and found the Reformation there nearly ruined by those fanatics.

Instantly he ascended the pulpit, and by a resistless exposition of the word of God disabused the public mind ; and a few most powerful discourses impressed the inhabitants of Wittenberg with new admiration of his eloquence and fortitude, and reverence of his authority.

One of the prophets, however, Martin Cellarius, conceived himself capable of softening the heart of Luther, if he could get but one private audience, and lay before him a summary of his doctrine. With great reluctance, Luther consented to receive him, with one of his friends, appointed a day and hour for the interview, and requested Melancthon to be present, from whom we have an account of what took place. Cellarius unfolded his tale at length, not without fluency. Luther assumed an air of unusual

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placidity, and patiently heard him out, not intending to trouble himself with any effort at refutation ; but, when he had finished, briefly said, " Take care what you do. Nothing that you have said has the least support from holy Scripture. They are only the figments of idle thoughts, the wild and pernicious dreams of a deceitful and dishonest spirit." Thereupon Cellarius, with a loud voice and mad gesticulation, beating the ground with his feet and the table with his hands, gave vent to his indignation at Luther for daring to suspect anything of that sort in a divine man ! His companion, Mark Stubner, thought proper to be calm, and, when the tempest of the other was blown out, addressed Luther thus : " That thou mayest know, O Luther, that I am endowed with the Spirit of God, I will now tell thee what thou hast conceived in thy heart ; and this is, that thou beginnest to incline to believe my doctrine true." Luther afterwards said, that if Stubner had read his thoughts, he would have perceived him to be meditating on the words of Christ, " The Lord rebuke thee, Satan." He only replied, " God, whom I revere and worship, will easily confound your evil spirits, that nothing of the sort take place."

This closed the interview, and the two impostors left him, threatening the great things that they would do. Melancthon said nothing, but felt the power of truth ; and neither he nor his noble friend, so far as it anywhere appears, ever afterwards felt any hesitation as to the unmingled wickedness of Storck, Munzer, and their followers. The mild theologian, whose caution had, for a moment, wavered into credulity, became the more constant defender of scriptural truth.

Weak, indeed, must be the man that would now listen to such fanatics as those which gained a hearing from Melancthon ; but we are not hastily to set down his affability as weakness. Let any one read the extant accounts of the establishment of monastic orders, and he will find similar fanaticism commanding undisputed reverence. A man or a woman, entertaining some favourite project, fancied this purpose to be of Divine inspiration, spoke of it as such, and persisted in trumpeting the revelation until Cardinals

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acquiesced, and the wealthy gave gold, lands, or man-sions; until the multitude believed, the clergy aided, and the Pope, perhaps after two or three refusals, gave a bull, and up sprang a new order. I could name persons of undoubted ability and good intentions, powerful writers, and possessed of great influence in their country, who, at this moment, seem to believe as firmly in a direct inspiration of their own projects, wise and unwise, as if they had gone up with Moses to the top of Sinai. All this is encouraged by the Church of Rome, and is a delusion so closely bordering upon truth, that it is one of the last to quit its hold on minds that have not recoiled into infidelity. In Melancthon it was no peculiar weakness.

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The two great leaders of the Reformation were agreed on the fundamental principle of Divine authority. On that Luther depended in his first assault on the doctrine of indulgences; and so did Melancthon, when he corrected the studies of the youth at Wittenberg. The first mention of translating the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures into German* is found in a letter of Luther, written in his hermitage or "Patmos," the castle of the Wartburg, on December 18th, 1521, just at the time when Storck and his company were spreading their absurdities in the very cradle of Reformed Christianity. His object was to furnish the whole multitude of the German people with a Bible exactly translated from the original texts, well printed, portable and cheap.

After his return to Wittenberg, we find him reporting the progress of this work, in a letter to Spalatin. "I had not only translated the Gospel according to St.

* There were other German versions, but very defective. Not only was the language poor, and the printing bad, but their original was also defective, it being the Latin Vulgate. It is remarkable, however, that one such version was written, if not printed, so early as the year 1462. (J. D. Michaëlis Syntagma Commentationum. Goettingæ, 1759. Beschreibung einiger alten Deutschen Bibel-Uebersetzungen vor D. Luthers Zeit.)

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John, but all the New Testament, in my Patmos. Philip and I now desire to revise the whole; and it shall be, if God so please, a worthy work. But your assistance will be sometimes necessary for the better construction of sentences. Hold yourself in readiness, therefore, but so as to supply us with simple forms of speech, not such as you use in camp or court. For this book can only be illustrated in simplicity. And that I may make a beginning, will you endeavour to furnish us with the names and colours—much should I like the sight also—of the jewels mentioned in Rev. xxi., either from the court, or wherever you can get them.” At this time, therefore, Melancthon was his principal, if not his only, assistant. It is not unlikely that the undertaking had been long contemplated by them both, and that, in order to its better accomplishment, Melancthon resumed his Hebrew studies very soon after coming to the University, as did Luther apply himself anew to Hebrew and Greek after entering his “Patmos.”

To the learned Secretary of Duke Frederic application was made, as we have just seen, for assistance in general revision, and for exact information concerning jewels, such as a courtier might contribute. Various other friends were consulted by Luther, and no doubt their assistance was also obtained on points of language with which they were specially conversant. Melancthon, also, collected succours of the same kind. As soon as they have turned back the torrent of prophetic and anti-baptist madness that broke in upon them from Zwickau, we find him addressing George Sturz, a physician and antiquarian of Erfurt, with whom he had not had any previous correspondence, but from whose learning as a numismatologist he hoped to receive assistance in giving German values to the Latin and Greek moneys mentioned in the New Testament. And he beseeches him, if he has anything to send, to hasten it before the next Leipsic fair, as their work is far advanced, and the press is urgent. How successful these applications were, and how unreservedly Melancthon applied his talent for patient and minute revision,—the talent so well cultivated during his connexion with the printer at Tubingen,

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—the version itself shows. It is in Germany what the Authorized Version is in England, and perhaps equally worthy of the national acceptance which it commands. It has maintained pre-eminence nearly ninety years longer than our own venerable and nearly perfect version, for it is so much older ; and every translator who can read German is sure to avail himself of its help. It is called, indeed, on the title-pages, Dr. Martin Luther's translation ; but this exclusive ascription of authorship must have arisen from the deferential humility of Melancthon, and the other fellow-labourers, who were content without participation in the fame. The historians, however, pay them the honour that is due. Others, particularly Pomeranus, Justus Jonas, and Aurogallus, rendered occasional assistance, and George Rorarius corrected the press ; but none of them gave such constant labour as Luther devoted to what he justly described as "the great work."

Luther himself spared no pains to produce renderings of the minutest accuracy. He caused sheep, rams, and calves to be killed at home, and learnt the proper names of their several parts from butchers. Often, as he himself said, with Philip, with Aurogallus, and others, he waited for a fortnight before he would venture to determine the meaning of a difficult word. At their meetings in his monastery Luther presided, with a Latin Bible of the old translation before him, and his own new version, which he always collated with the Hebrew. Melancthon compared it with the Greek text, and Cruciger with the Chaldee. Each came prepared by private study ; and after careful examination and comparison of the place to be translated, the version was at length settled. And before his death Luther himself revised the first edition as daily consideration had suggested.*

Bugenhagius, when occupied in this labour, invited the others to dine with him on the day of its completion ; and ever after celebrated the anniversary, which he called "the Feast of the Translation of the Bible." This good man was twelve years older than Melancthon, and towards the latter part of his life became very infirm, — the mere shadow of himself. Melancthon, always much

* Melch. Adam. Vita Lutheri.

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affected by the sight of his decay, used to pray that he might himself be spared from the like decrepitude.*

As was to be expected, the Romanists found great fault with Luther and his Bible. They taxed him with impiety, because he had sometimes consulted learned Jews on a difficult passage in the Hebrew; and they ridiculed him for having recommended women to read the sacred volume. And Maimbourg exults that many Princes, ecclesiastical and secular, the Archduke Ferdinand, for example, brother of the Emperor, George Duke of Saxony, and the Duke of Bavaria, in public laws and edicts commanded this perverse version to be burnt, and "compelled"—*required*, he should have said, for they were not always able to compel—"all their subjects, under penalty of heavy fines, to give up whatever copies of the book they had to Magistrates appointed for that purpose."†

As well might they forbid the tide to flow.

Jerome Emser, a Doctor of Leipsic, and Councillor of Duke George of Saxony, was of all others the most furious hater of this translation. Every instance of fidelity to the original text where it differs from the Vulgate he branded as a horrible corruption, and signalized his zeal by publishing another version done according to the Latin. That, however, he had a right to do. To calumniate is one thing; to counteract by opposing diligence to diligence is another,—always providing that the laws of truth and courtesy be respected.

In later years the exigencies of the Reformation turned Melancthon's pen to the composition of public documents and theological and ecclesiastical writings; but during the three years following his first application to the revision of Luther's version, his writings were chiefly, if not altogether, biblical. He wrote a preface to the Book of Lamentations, and to the Psalter of Pomeranus. He translated the Book of Proverbs into Latin. Biblical annotations we have already noticed. And it would appear, from his correspondence, that he abandoned himself often, as younger men happily can do, to

* Mel. Adam. Vita Bugenhagii.

† Apud Seckendorf. Hist. Lutheran., lib. i., sect. 51.

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purely literary study, a luxury that is never wasted, but surely turns to good account amidst the severer toils that must be spent, in maturer age, with more steady dedication to the instruction, the debates, or the business of the world and of the church.

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If the Protestant Reformation had not been essentially controversial, a revolt against sacerdotal ignorance and Papal tyranny, it might have advanced gently, as an amelioration rather than an overthrow. But as it had such an origin, nothing could be more unfair nor more unphilosophical than to complain of the excesses of multitudes whom Luther aroused in Germany, and whom his gentler coadjutor laboured to instruct.

Suddenly did the populations of province after province hear of a new religion, and the downfall of the old priesthood. Clever or plausible men, but untaught, devoid of the graces of Christianity, and therefore incapable of acting according to its precepts, found themselves thrown into the arena where every voice cried execration on the hierarchy from whose dominion the people were just emancipated. The wickedness of the Popes, the ambition and rapacity of the higher clergy, few excepted, and the notorious vices and infirmities of the lower, with the absurdities of doctrine and practice that were now drawn out into public view, brought a terrible retribution on the guilty. But these were not the only sufferers. Indignation, however just, if it be not chastened by holy principle, grows furious. Satire, when it becomes habitual, loses its edge on those at whom it has been levelled, and its blows recoil to stupefy the conscience of the satirist himself, who then assails that which is holy no less than that which is ridiculous. Preachers whom God never sent, but who find themselves to-day released from the canonical restraints of yesterday, are, of course, but novices, without that humility which alone could keep them from falling into the condemnation of the devil. Such persons cannot possibly possess that virtue, and must, therefore, be

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conceited, dogmatical, and violent. Some, in the delirium of a new liberty, have but one idea, that of demolition; like Carlstadt, who, without waiting to take counsel with his brethren, invited the mob to bring hatchets and break up the images in one of the churches of Wittenberg. *His* error consisted in doing a right thing in a turbulent and trifling spirit, and without seeking to obtain legal sanction, or to promote the purity of Divine worship by moral influence. The ungodly, the self-sufficient, the fanatical, the violent,—all wrought upon by the idea of a religious revolution to bring them an inconceivably large measure of civil liberty,—ran into deplorable excesses. Here, spirituality was exalted into madness, and the victim of delusion proclaimed himself a prophet. There, private judgment, rude, impetuous, and worldly, presumed to controvert fundamental truths, and to set aside Divine commandments, as did some who rejected baptism. In short, the rudimental errors of all sects possible were evolved from that chaos of confusion which spread over Germany after the secession of Luther from the Church of Rome, and the Reformation of worship that began at Wittenberg.

All this is too plain to be denied, and too disastrous to be palliated. It only shows into what condition ecclesiastical and civil society had sunk, and how much need there was of some influence that might subdue the barbarism of the times, of teachers who could spread intelligence, and of preachers able to point out the paths of truth.

Let us, therefore, take a dispassionate review of letters exchanged between Erasmus and Melancthon.

Erasmus, be it remembered, continued in friendly correspondence with some of the Reformers. At all the seats of learning throughout Europe, he was regarded with respect, or even reverence, and was most glad to use his influence as a scholar to check the outburst which his own satire on the Monks, and labours to promote sound learning, had certainly provoked. The favourable feeling towards Erasmus was very strong at Wittenberg; Joachim Camerarius, the biographer of Melancthon, was one of his most ardent admirers; and we may notice by the

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way, that it is not possible to read his biography without tracing indications of a strong passion for courting the favourable notice of eminent men. To Melancthon Camerarius was a faithful satellite, and much enjoyed an excursion in his company, during some months in the year 1524, to Würtemberg, which his friend took for the benefit of his health, together with a rather large party. Having attended him to Bretten, his native place, he there left him, unable to resist a strong desire to see and converse with the prince of scholars and of courtiers, who was then at Basil.

By a letter from Erasmus, written shortly after that visit of Camerarius, it would appear that Melancthon was half disposed to extend his journey to Basil; and that Erasmus himself was only deterred by the great distance from going to Wittenberg to converse with him and Luther. After giving some reasons for not having written to any of the Reformers for some time past, he enumerated the good offices which he had been interposing on their behalf.

"To the utmost of my power I have kept down the clamours of the theologians, and restrained the anger of the Princes; and this I am still doing. I have separated the cause of literature from the cause of Luther. I have taken pains to obtain consideration for the Gospel without tumult, or certainly without grave disturbance. Nor do I yet neglect any opportunity, but have written to the Emperor, and to other Princes, performing the part of a Gamaliel, and desiring a happy conclusion to the drama. I had written freely to [Pope] Adrian on this matter until I felt that I was in danger: not that the Pope himself attacked me, but it was to be feared that he would not protect me against those who did; nor was it safe to trust him, even when he spoke blandly. I also wrote to [Pope] Clement very freely, and to Cardinal Campeggio.

"What your Church is, I know not; but certainly it contains persons who, I fear, will subvert everything; and hence the Princes feel themselves compelled to lay restraint both on good men and bad. Those persons are ever talking of the Gospel, the word of God, faith, Christ,

and the Spirit ; but if you observe their conduct, you will find them to be very unlike all that of which they speak. And must we, then, cast off Lords, Popes, and Bishops, only to suffer from yet fiercer tyrants ?..... You will say that the Gospel had its false apostles, who, under pretence of piety, sought to gratify their own appetite. But, in the present case, the chief men who profess this Gospel tenderly cherish those persons. There is Capito, whose craftiness I always suspected. There is Hedio, who instigated an impure buffoon on occasion of my letters, for which the man would have been severely punished ; but he cried for mercy, because he had a wife and young children..... (Ecolampadius is rather more modest than the rest ; and yet, even in him, I could wish to see more evangelical sincerity. And how does Zuinglius excite sedition ! But, for the present, I name no more.

“ They do not agree with you, neither are they in accord with one another ; and yet they ask us, resting on *their* authority, to abandon all the orthodox Fathers and the Councils. You teach that they are in error who fling away images as a wicked thing. Yet what tumults has not Zuinglius raised on account of images ? You teach that a vestment is of no importance one way or the other. Yet here many teach that the cowl must, at any rate, be put off. You teach that Bishops and the constitutions of Bishops are to be submitted to, so long as they lead not to impiety ; but, they teach that the whole is impious and antichristian.”

Many seceders from the Church of Rome, if we may believe Erasmus, had abused his friendship, and in various ways done him injury, they being always in the wrong, and he invariably in the right. Perhaps some of them had really given him just reason for complaint ; and he passionately asks, “ How can I persuade myself that they are led by the Spirit of Christ, when their conduct is thus at variance with the teaching of Christ ? Formerly the Gospel made the ferocious gentle, the rapacious kind, the turbulent pacific, the abusive courteous ; but these turn furious, they fraudulently possess themselves of what belongs to others ; they stir up tumults everywhere ; they speak evil even of the most worthy. I see

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new hypocrites, new tyrants; but I perceive not a particle of the spirit of the Gospel." He says that he has written against the Reformation, not willingly, but in self-defence, because his silence had been misinterpreted, and it behoved him not to incur the displeasure of Princes and of Pontiffs, nor to expose himself to the wrath of theologians and Monks. As for Melancthon, of him he had written and spoken kindly to Campeggio the Legate, expressing a wish that he could be separated from those contentions, but despairing of his ever being induced to make a recantation.

The charges laid against the Reformers in this letter were heavy, and such as were not to be evaded by silence. Melancthon instantly replied.

He acknowledged that some had forgotten both humanity and religion in their treatment of Erasmus, despite his worth, his eminent public services, and his age. And as for those who preached sedition, raved against learning, and weakened civil authority, they sought power for themselves, but did not teach Christ. Luther was most unlike them, and often deplored the hypocrisy of those who, under pretext of religion, sought to overturn the kingdom of the Pope, merely to establish a pharisaic dominion of their own. Yet he could not desert the cause he had espoused for the public good because of scandals that Satan threw in his way. And reminding Erasmus of the principal subjects on which Luther had entered into controversy, he appealed to him to say whether his cause and that of the Gospel were not the same.

"Wherefore I beseech you, my Erasmus, that, in the first place, you will not believe Luther to have anything in common with those whose conduct is justly reprehended; and then, that you will not think ill of him on account of the folly or temerity of what any other person teaches. As for the spirit of Luther, there cannot be any question for a moment. For, not to mention his quarrel with the Pope, he certainly now declares utter abhorrence of cruelty, and ambition, and all seditious counsels; and, with great peril of his fame, and even of his life, opposes himself to every new faction of sanguinary teachers.

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You make up a catalogue of some of the most dishonest men that walk the earth, and then you join with them Æcolampadius, and others like him; but, I pray you, what has this to do with the matter? For my own part, I cannot, with a clear conscience, condemn the doctrines of Luther, but shall defend them yet more strongly, if holy Scripture so require; for whether others pervert them to superstition or to folly is no concern of mine. Assuredly I shall not suffer myself to be turned from this determination, either by the authority of men, or by any scandals that may arise."

The remainder of the letter, which is not long, consists of general expressions of good-will, and a few friendly cautions, much needed by the man who laboured so hard for the good opinion of parties the most opposite, and professed the vain desire of bringing over Popes and Kings to the Gospel without making any sudden change in doctrine or in worship.

Erasmus replied at great length, mingling sarcasms and pleasantries with complaints of the books and sermons of the Reformers, whom he thought bent on effecting an impossibility. The world, he said, was wicked, as the sea is briny; and as its waters retained their saltness, never to be sweetened by all the rivers that flow into it, and all the rains that fall, so must the world be unchanged in wickedness, whatever might be done to make it better.*

The efficacy of those principles which were expounded by the chief actors in the moral revolution of Europe, may now be estimated after a trial of more than three centuries, which proves their power. And we can dispassionately survey the events of that revolution, without confounding the stern and holy heroism of its chiefs with the undeniable folly and wickedness of many that were counted as their followers.

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Multitudes who knew nothing of the religion taught at Wittenberg were counted as followers of the

* Des. Erasmi Roterodami Epistolarum Opus. Basiliæ, ex Officina Frobeniana, 1538. Lib. xix.

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Reformers; and at this day we hear the sedition and bloodshed of the Peasant War, as it was called, attributed to the influence of Lutheranism. To remove this misapprehension, we must review the facts.

The Germans ever boasted of their liberties. Liberty was anciently regarded as the birthright of every German, whether he were a Prince or Noble, or a boor. In the more primitive state of Teutonic society, the populations of the little states into which Germany was divided chiefly consisted of graziers and farmers; some wandering without any fixed habitation, and others cultivating grounds without the privilege or the restraint of boundaries. Even when long occupation had invested the agriculturist with something like the importance of a landowner, he took the usufruct, indeed, but claimed no exclusive or perpetual right of property.

Yet they who counted most heads of cattle, and could command the longest trains of followers, acquired a social power, almost equivalent with that obtained by the owners of real property; and, like the Kings of whom we read in the Book of Genesis, they could, at any moment, array little armies of trained servants for defence or for aggression. They scarcely knew money, and had as little conception of the forms and restrictions of artificial or civilized society. In the second century of the Christian era, the Romans gave those free Germans money, and, in exchange, took away some part of their independence.

Colonists and Ecclesiastics from Italy, France, and Britain, imperceptibly multiplied in the ages following, and so did the arts and burdens of a new kind of life, imposed by the conquerors upon the conquered. Estates shaped themselves within imperfectly-marked boundaries, and became sources of revenue to hereditary proprietors. Power grew stronger; subordination slowly settled around the feudal centres; new necessities of defence and luxury impelled the lords temporal and the priesthood to exact heavier contributions; and, in the times of Frederic III. and Maximilian I., the ostentation of wealth and military power had risen to an unprecedented height in the Imperial Court. So did profligacy and ambition

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luxuriate in the Court of Rome. The course of oppression, both by Princes and Prelates, outran that of popular decay; and memories of liberty long cherished by the German people, rude and untaught as they were, wakened up again. It was then the peasants responded to the voice of any demagogue who bade them break off the yoke, without considering the hopelessness of such an effort.

Groaning under aggravated burdens of *frohndienst*, or "villanage," and exhausted by exactions of the clergy, made under pretext of war with the Turks, the poor people caught blindly at every promise of relief, come whence it might. Signal evidences of this disposition remain on the face of history.

Between four and five hundred years before Luther, Thuringia and Saxony rebelled against the Emperor Henry IV. and their Bishops, (A.D. 1073,) on account of an imposition of tithes, and torrents of blood were shed.

The Helvetians, the Netherlanders, and the Belgians were notorious for their jealousy of ancient rights and immunities.

We hear Maximilian complaining, in the Imperial Diet at Constance, (A.D. 1507,) that the King of France had stirred up the peasants of the Belgian provinces to rebellion. There was a formidable rustic army; a cheese and a loaf were painted on its banners; and the objects of the *cheese-and-bread* insurrection, as it was called, were to get rid of all burdens, and reduce the nobility to order. Albert, Duke of Saxony, encountered thirty or forty thousand insurgents in open field, and quenched the cheese-and-bread riot in the blood of most of them.

The Swabians had risen in like manner, (A.D. 1491,) but were excelled in courage and success by the peasants of Spire, on the Rhine, (A.D. 1503,) who formed a strong confederacy, called the *Bundschuh*, or "League-shoe," from a device on their standard,—for the recovery of old liberties.

Under the leadership of "Poor Kuntze," a farmer of Beutelsbach, in the state of Würtemberg, (A.D. 1514,) a sedition of the same kind broke out, threatening destruction to the nobility, the prelates, and the clergy, all of

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whom they too truly charged with avarice and profligacy. Schorndorf, and several other towns, were in their power; and unless the Emperor and Princes had made overtures of concession, besides displaying military force, the consequences would probably have been far more calamitous than those of any previous insurrection. The imposts were moderated, a few of the leaders were executed, and the country was pacified for the time.

So recently as the year 1515,—only two years before Luther's preaching against indulgences,—while Maximilian I. was in conference with the Kings of Poland and Hungary in Vienna, he received the grateful intelligence that one of his servants had killed two thousand rebel peasants in Carniola. But this was trifling in comparison with the horrors of a general revolt in Hungary and Transylvania, at the same time. Their complaint was of the tyranny and brutality of princes, and prelates, and clergy. One Lawrence, a Presbyter, and one Michael, a Monk, were among their captains. Several Bishops and nobles were impaled. Of fourteen Bishops only one survived; four hundred noblemen perished; and tranquillity was not restored until the death of seventy thousand men, women, and children had spread mute horror over all those lands.

"What age," exclaimed Cuspinianus, an Imperial Councillor, "can tell me of such a deed as this? Who ever has read or heard of such things as these? But there are others that far surpass what I have written, and there is much that shame forbids me to record."

And there is much, doubtless, that the most diligent compilers have not gathered from the records of those restless provinces. For it is evident that discontent was universal, and organized rebellion widely spread. Hungarians, Croats, and Swabians communicated with each other by all means, the press not excepted, and freely circulated "libels," exhorting the boors on the Austrian and Croatian frontiers to a common gathering,—*an die Versammlung gemeiner Burschafft*,—to join in counsel, and break off their fetters. Surely, there was never a more troublous age, nor ever a people more discontented than the Germans; but they who attributed the

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troubles of Germany to the preaching of Luther and the teaching of Melancthon, threw a veil of silence over all these facts. It is due, therefore, to mere historic truth, to bring them into view.*

"But did not the preaching of the Reformers fan up the flames of popular disaffection in Germany?"

I will recount the facts, following the dates, and the reader shall judge.

Thomas Munzer, a Priest, the notorious leader of the peasant war, was a native of Stolberg, on the borders of the Hercynian forest. When but a young man, usher in a school at Halle, about the year 1512, he felt powerful aspirations after fame, and would have headed a faction then, had opportunity been afforded. At this time Luther was not heard of, nor for five years afterwards. But we do not find Munzer emerging into notoriety until 1522, when he is preaching furiously at Zwickau, encouraging fanatical prophets, and indoctrinating Storck and his companions in the absurdities which they endeavoured to propagate at Wittenberg, to the perplexity of Melancthon, and the alarm and indignation of Luther. From Zwickau, he removed to Alstadt, and, by the tacit permission of the Elector Frederic, obtained employment as a preacher, to the great grief of Luther and his friends. From Alstadt he withdrew, in the beginning of August, 1524, after having led the mob into a church, and broken the images; and found yet more congenial society in Mühlhausen,† where his fanaticism blazed out in its utmost fervour. He performed a ceremony on baptized persons, which they mistook for baptism, and, with his followers, received the designation of "Anabaptist," or, "re-baptizer." They extolled a state of emancipation from the restraints of decency, and the simpler folk mistook the grossest licentiousness for Gospel liberty! They addressed each other with the familiar compellation of "brother" or "sister," and were wont to assemble by themselves in gardens. Besides the name

* Seckendorf. Hist. Luth., lib. i., sect. 1.

† In obedience to a citation of the civil authority, he appeared at Weimar, about the 1st of August; but, while his cause was pending, escaped at night, and went to Mühlhausen.

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"Anabaptist," people also called them *Gartenbrüder, Träumer, Geisterer*, "Garden-brothers," "Dreamers," "Spiritual." These very spiritual persons, in their turn, poured contempt on all who dreamt not with them; and as for the holy Scriptures, they called them "Bibel, Bubel, Babel," and treated the sacred book accordingly. "The Spirit," they said, was a sufficient source of knowledge and faith, even without the Bible. Their own fury was the only inspiration they respected.

Artfully confounding religion with rebellion, Munzer inveighed at once against the imposts laid upon the people, and, as in Turgovia, against the ecclesiastical authorities who refused the people the benefit of hearing the preaching of evangelical doctrine. For it must be noted well, that the insurrection of the peasants chiefly spread in states that were as yet unvisited by the Reformation.

This insurrection began in Swabia, in November, 1524, provoked, as it would seem, by the rapacity of an Abbat, who seized on some property left by poor persons deceased, and by the rigorous exactions of certain Magistrates. Munzer heard of it, and constituted himself prophet and captain of the malcontents. Under the instruction of one Shapher, a Zuinglian preacher at Memmingen, they presented twelve Articles embodying the expectations which were to be satisfied before they would lay down their arms. They demanded,—

Permission to choose their own Ministers to preach the pure word of God, without any mixture of human error :

Exemption from tithing of all but wheat; and the tenth of wheat to be distributed among Ministers, the poor, and public works :

Exaction of obedience to Magistrates in those things only which it is lawful for Christians to perform; and release from servitude, which men redeemed by the blood of Christ ought not to suffer :

Deliverance from a great part of the burdens laid on them :

Permission to hunt and fish everywhere :

Common right to forests everywhere :

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An abolition of all customs, in general, that were contrary to their liberty.

The insurgents bound themselves by oath to persevere until they had obtained these concessions; which were not unreasonable, and, excepting only the first demand, which aimed at the establishment, in Germany, of the Zuinglian fashion of church-government, deserved fair consideration. The first error lay in seeking redress by force of arms, although even that was less to be blamed where there was no constitutional provision for civil reformation; but worst of all was the madness of Munzer and his followers, who found a ready hearing for their imposture amongst the ignorant and infuriated boors. No sooner did he hear of their insurrection, than he converted the Franciscan monastery of Mühlhausen into a cannon-foundry, and collected a raw multitude out of the neighbouring country under the name of an army. One Pfeiffer, formerly a Premonstratensian Monk, started up in quality of preacher, and inflamed both Munzer and his miserable hosts with an accession of new madness, pretending to see Divine visions, and to take orders from angels. Under those orders he led large bodies of armed peasants to lay waste the castles of the nobility around Mühlhausen; and thus they made negotiation impossible, by resorting to force. Munzer also took the field; and, having ascertained that the Lutherans were all opposed to them, raved against Lutheranism as a new form of tyranny. France, they said, Italy, and Germany, were all risen against the tyrants; and the war-cry for the wakening world was to be, "Thomas Munzer, and the sword of Gideon!"

Swabia, Würtemberg, Franconia, the banks of the Rhine, and Alsace, swarmed with the rustic rebels, who, for a short time, laid everything waste, and committed atrocities as vile as any that the annals of civil warfare bear in record. Meanwhile the Princes entered into a confederacy for common defence; and soon their soldiers began to cut down the insurgents by thousands.

On the 15th of May, 1525, no fewer than five thousand—some say seven thousand—fell at Frankenhäusen in a single battle; and on the 24th of that month the

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city of Mühlhausen, Munzer's head-quarters, capitulated with the Langrave and other Princes. Eleven hundred wives and daughters of the citizens walked out bare-foot and bare-headed, and knelt down to implore compassion. The Senate and twelve hundred citizens came the next day, bare-footed, and carrying white rods in their hands, knelt down thrice, and thrice cried for mercy. With promise to pay a heavy fine, which, however, was not fully exacted, they received pardon. Munzer, Pfeiffer, and other leaders of the rebellion, were executed; and thus ended the war of the rustics, which cannot fairly be said to have had any dependence on the Lutheran Reformation.*

What Melancthon thought of the peasant war may be gathered from his letters.

The day after hearing of the rout of Munzer's legion at Frankenhausen, his flight to a nunnery, and his capture and delivery to Count Ernest at Mansfeld, he wrote thus to Camerarius:—

“Although I am much grieved at the slaughter of that wretched multitude, and that the Princes are compelled thus to put down those robberies, I cannot but rejoice that the leader of the sedition is made prisoner; and am glad, not only that we shall have tranquillity, but that there is now clear evidence what is the spirit of which those people boasted. And what a kingdom! What fair dreams! With what senseless prophecies did he not impel the foolish multitude to take up arms! How often did he not promise to take the foremost place in battle, obedient to celestial oracles, that he might change the constitution of our cities! But all this has come to nothing; and from my inmost soul I thank the Lord, and pray Him still to prosper us, and amend the vices of the Church more gently.”

In another letter he relates that the Prince Palatine requested him to give his judgment on the twelve Articles, and that he returned a confutation of them, and gave counsel that they should trust in Christ. He refers to the traces of that ruinous outbreak in all directions; but says that Bretten, his native town, stood untouched,

Seckendorf. Hist. Lutheran., lib. i., sect. 61; lib. ii., sect. 1—4.

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while flames of civil war overran the whole neighbourhood. "For," said he, exultingly, "my fellow-citizens kept their faith." *

On the other hand, there was much to try the faith of Melancthon. The fires of persecution had already been kindled for the destruction of the Lutheran Reformation, especially in the Netherlands; and now a personal friend of his is counted with the sufferers. Henry of Zutphen, who had not long left the University of Wittenberg, after being nearly killed by the mob in Ditmarsh, was immolated by the Priests, who saw him cast into the flames while he had yet life enough remaining to pray for his murderers. While Melancthon wept for his friend, he knew that there was no human power to prevent the recent edict of Worms from being executed in like manner upon thousands.

A FUNERAL AND A MARRIAGE.

As I am not writing biographies of the Elector of Saxony and Martin Luther, I must not be tempted away from the present subject by the death of the one or the marriage of the other. We have only to observe how Melancthon bears himself on each occasion.

Between Frederic the Wise, and the Greek Professor in his University of Wittenberg, there was a congeniality of character that gave rise to mutual esteem. The Prince might incur a charge of weakness, and the scholar might be suspected of timidity; but, after all, posterity confesses that they both were wise.

When the rustic war was raging elsewhere, this electorate was only disturbed by a natural fear that the calamities which befell neighbouring states might invade Saxony also; but it is remarkable that, although the rebels did not yet ask for anything more than the alleviation of temporal burdens, the states where the Gospel was preached without restriction were kept at peace. About three weeks before his death, Frederic expressed his own view of the cause of those troubles in a letter to

* Philippi Melancthonis *τοῦ ἐν ἀγίοις* Concilia. Collect. Stud. et Op. Christ. Pezelii. Neustadii, 1600.

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his brother John. "I could wish from my heart to show you what I think, and what answer should be given to the Princes;" (who desired help to put down the rebellion;) "but you know my weakness. Yet this is too great a matter to be handled by main force. Perhaps cause has been given for the poor people to make this uproar, and especially by forbidding them the word of God; but they have been dealt hardly with in many ways by us rulers, both spiritual and temporal."

And some days afterwards, he wrote as follows to the same, concerning one of his own provinces:—"If you can do away with the tithe in Franconia, and so make the people somewhat more quiet and tractable, it will not be ill judged to do the same thing in other places. Our Lord God will no doubt make it up to you and me, righteously and graciously, in many ways."

But most impressive were the farewell words he addressed to the assembled members of his family immediately after his last confession and communion. "Dear children, I pray you for God's sake, if I have done anything to cause you grief, whether by word or deed, that you, for His sake, will forgive me, and pray others to do the same. For we Princes often treat the poor people with hardship and unkindness." *

Soon after pronouncing these words, Frederic died (May 5th, 1525). Luther pronounced a funeral oration in German, and Melancthon in Latin. The latter now appeared before the University a real mourner.

"In this public mourning, and most bitter and universal grief, whether we are to deplore the death of the wisest of Princes, or to weep for the loss of the republic,—for there can be no greater loss than that he is taken from us,—or whether by this oration the minds of our chief men and of the public have to be relieved, I feel that I have not brought with me courage and self-possession equal to the work. Even this voice, choked with sorrow, interrupted with tears, is witness of affection and of reverence." He professed inability to do justice to the virtues of the departed, to whom he had been indebted for innumerable benefits, and whom he admired

* Seckendorf. *Comment. de Lutheran.*, lib. ii., sect. 2.

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and loved for the excellence of his private character. On his virtues as a Prince and as a man, Melancthon descants with much feeling; and I take a single passage as no less descriptive of the speaker than of the deceased :—

“He is greatly mistaken who thinks that a country can be kept in order by force of arms alone. For this the arts of peace, justice, moderation, constancy, a lively care of the public safety, diligence in dispensing justice, and ending the disagreements of citizens, forbearance towards the multitude when in error, severity in punishing the wicked, clemency in saving them that can be corrected, are far more effectual. But the multitude are carried away with admiration of martial courage; for it can see that the clearest. They make more of an athletic soldier than of a modest and peaceable citizen. The virtues of learning and urbanity, like other good things, are unseen and unthought of by the crowd, who fancy that little praise is due to such as make peace and arts their study. But, for my part, I think a care for peace to be far, far more excellent than familiarity with camps, whether you regard its benefits, or consider the nature of humanity; nor can I suffer Antony, a great General, indeed, but one who did great injury to the republic, to be preferred to Augustus, a pacific Prince, and lover of repose. Neither did Alcibiades more good for the Greeks than Solon. The one, with war after war, brought his country to ruin; but the other, by the laws he gave, and the constitution he established, saved the state that had been founded. Therefore God endowed Frederic with these more useful and better virtues. And, thus endowed, Frederic was ever careful, through all the troubles which disturbed Germany, that his own subjects should not be involved in war.”

Certainly, if the deceased Elector had been as warlike as were some of his neighbours, he would not only have brought the horrors of war upon Saxony, but, unable to appreciate the motives of the Reformers, or the value of the truths they taught, might have closed his territory against a purely religious reformation. No man, therefore, could estimate his worth more truly than

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Melancthon, who now mourned as if he had lost a father.

A month had not elapsed after the interment of this good Prince. Anxiety and sorrow were weighing down the spirit of Melancthon, when he heard, to his amazement, that Luther was espoused to Catherine Bore, a lady who had escaped from a nunnery some years before. The intelligence came suddenly, and proved that although Luther could confide in the judgment of his friend on a question of doctrine or church-discipline, he could not trust him to decide whether or not he, an ex-Monk, should marry the ex-Nun. Melancthon did not know that on the very day of the late Elector's death, Luther was unbosoming his thoughts to another friend, telling him that "his Catherine" had refused the hand of a Doctor who sued for it, and allowed him to believe that a suit from himself would not be rejected. That very day, therefore, he determined to confirm, by example, the doctrine he had taught, to marry as other Priests had married, and to marry Catherine Bore.

Luther, having deferred the marriage until the 13th day of June, probably in consideration of the death of his Sovereign and patron, then invited Bugenhagenius, (or Pomeranus, as he is also called,) a theologian and preacher, who had taught the unlawfulness of priestly celibacy, Apellus, a lawyer, and Luke, a painter, and in their presence was espoused, with due solemnity, to the lady of his choice. A fortnight afterwards he took her to his house, gave a good marriage-supper to his friends; but as Melancthon appears to have been one of the "wise men" who manifested alarm at what they were pleased to consider a precipitate or unseasonable proceeding, he was not included in the party.

Recovered, however, from the surprise, he calmly reconsidered the whole matter, felt that Luther had not committed a sin, "was not fallen," and employed his best influence to justify what he had seemed ready to condemn. In a long letter in Greek, addressed to his friend Camerarius, who then taught humanities at Nuremberg, he argued in favour of the marriage which he had been counted too wise to witness. His delicacy, however, was

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scarcely less admirable, at first, than his honesty and magnanimity at last.*

ACADEMY OF NUREMBERG.

The memory of Melancthon continues to be cherished at Nuremberg, where he might almost be regarded as the father of literary and theological studies. His statue adorns the Gymnasium. After the abolition of mass and ceremonies, and the adherence of the Senate to the doctrine and worship of the Reformation, in spite of Papal remonstrance and Monkish contradiction, he advised the senators, with all of whom he was in friendly correspondence, to fortify their cause and benefit their fellow-citizens by the establishment of a school. Sound learning, he calculated, would tend to put ignorant Preachers to shame, and scriptural influences would counteract the pestilential example of wicked ones. The advice drew on him importunate requests to go to Nuremberg and superintend the work; but he declared that nothing should induce him to quit the service of the Elector. He would stand by his friends and the cause of God in Wittenberg, notwithstanding the burden of duties, too heavy to be borne with comfort, or the scantiness of a stipend that was barely sufficient for his maintenance. He consented, however, to go to Nuremberg, and give the Senate the benefit of his counsel. This he did in October, 1525; and, in the year following, having assisted to obtain Professors, went thither again, and delivered a brilliant oration at the opening of the institution.†

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The theologian of the Lutheran Reformation could not be confined within the circle of professorial duties at Wittenberg, neither were his counsels in other cities to be sought only for such congenial undertakings as that of the Bavarian Academy.

The boors had been once beaten; but the spirit of

* Seckendorf, lib. ii., sect. 5.

† Declamationes, tom. i. In Laudem novæ Scholæ.

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revolt, still unsubdued, threatened a yet wider and more stubborn insurrection. In Thuringia, for example, turbulent Preachers were declaiming against the tyranny of rulers, and the multitude seemed on the point of breaking out into rebellion, and repeating the excesses of the Anabaptist rabble of Munzer. None could deny that the poor were oppressed; and although the Magistrates who silenced pretended religious demagogues did no more than their duty, they exposed themselves to popular hatred; while others, in states adhering to the Papacy, inflicted a real grievance on the people, by forbidding the Gospel to be preached. Hence arose the din of accusation and recrimination on all sides. Popish Princes charged their liberal brethren with encouraging sedition; John, Elector of Saxony, far more courageous than Frederic the Wise, with his friend the Landgrave of Hesse, reasonably retorted on the Papists, that their manifold persecutions of their subjects inevitably provoked sedition. A third party, as usual, dreamt of a middle way, not only in compromise between absolutism and license, but between the Gospel and the Mass.

Charles V., whom experience had not yet taught that efforts of mere authority cannot still the tumults of a people tormented and irritated by civil and ecclesiastical oppression, proposed to pacify Germany by force. By a mandate issued at Toledo on the 24th of May, 1525, he cited the Electors, and the representatives of states and free cities, to meet in Diet at Augsburg, in the month of October, in order to extirpate Lutheranism out of the Empire. By a letter from his own hand, penned more gently, he invited the Elector of Saxony in particular; but the Elector's delegate at the Imperial Court warned his master of the danger that would beset him if he ventured to appear at the Diet thus convened. The Landgrave, too, wrote to the Elector, advising a union of the Lutheran Princes. These two Princes met at Freienwalde a few days before a very scanty Diet sat at Augsburg, and agreed to invite other Princes, states, and cities, to join them in a remonstrance to the Emperor, and to make proposals for the pacification of Germany by means of righteous concessions. The Electors of Treves and

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the Palatinate, the Marquises of Brandenburg and Franconia, the Dukes of Luneburg, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg, the Princes of Anhalt and Henneberg, many Counts, a large body of the nobility of the Empire, many cities, and among them Nuremberg, Strasburg, Augsburg itself, Ulm, and Magdeburg,—these all united on the side of reformation, and sent their delegates to represent them in the Diet, where Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother, presided in his stead.

The legates were instructed to complain of the severity of language employed by the Emperor in his indication; and to prove that the late insurrection of the peasants, which these very Princes had suppressed, with hazard of their own lives, was to be imputed to unseasonable harshness of the same kind. They were to remind Ferdinand and his supporters that Divine truth could not be torn out of men's hearts by force; but that, if such violence continued, greater calamities would follow, and the word of God itself, brought into the strife, and associated with deeds of insubordination and vengeance, would fall into contempt. They were to demand observance of the recess of Nuremberg,—a sort of armistice agreed on in a Diet held in that city,—and require the cause in which religion and the souls of men were concerned, to be so treated that present evils might not be made worse. And they were further instructed to demand an adjournment to some other time and place, and a suspension of the persecuting edict of Worms.

The Diet could not resist such reasonable demands, presented by so strong a confederacy: a recess was worded gently, and they adjourned until the 9th of January, 1526. By prorogation, however, it was delayed until June 25th, when the first Diet of Spire opened its proceedings, which were favourably influenced by the preparatory counsels of Melancthon.

Seckendorf quotes a German manuscript written by his hand, and preserved in the records of that Diet, which is so very characteristic that I must reproduce the quotation, at least in substance, and thereby show the firmness and moderation of the man.

In this document two questions were to be examined:

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First, Should the Reformers content themselves with preaching and receiving true doctrine, leaving abuses to be corrected by the Bishops? or, secondly, If they slighted episcopal authority, would they be guilty of schism? Should they, or should they not, support Luther in his rejection of canonical authorities? "For when," says the paper, "they cannot gainsay the doctrine, they seek occasion to oppress us by alleging that it is wicked to do anything without the sanction of the Bishops. This they wish to prove by affirming, 1. That the Bishop has an ordinary power beyond which none can go to establish anything in the Church; 2. The mass, monastic vows, and other such things, have been in use for many ages, and the Church, which cannot err, has not abolished them; 3. Obedience is better than sacrifice, therefore we should submit; 4. Charity requires us to bear with the infirmity of others; 5. The peril of war, which is to be expected if we do not obey, ought to be avoided."

On the first point Melancthon answered in the sentences that follow:—

"Ministers of the word of God are bound to teach the primary article of faith, concerning trust in Christ; nor can they omit or conceal this, unless they would sin against His commandment, who says, 'Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in heaven.' The saying of David, also, must be borne in mind: 'I have believed, therefore have I spoken.' And this is the sacrifice of praise. It is also certain that this doctrine has not been rightly set forth; that, although men are bound by Christ to do His works, the Monks and Priests have devised a new and false worship, with vows, masses, and invocation of saints, by which they hope to save themselves, and others who perform them. Preachers ought, for conscience sake, to reprove these errors. (See Ezek. xxxiii. 8.) This is also clearly required in the second commandment of the Decalogue, by which false doctrine is forbidden. Now, there were false doctrines concerning the merit of works—satisfaction made by ourselves—application of the benefits of the mass to others—the equalling of monastic life to baptism—invocation of saints—their merit,

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which has been said to profit us as much as the merit of Christ. But these are manifest blasphemies. Then there are other abuses in the lives of the clergy: the Pope and Bishops neglect their duty, make themselves Kings over the Emperor and the Princes, waste the goods of the Church upon their own tyranny, and in all this they make great ostentation of the name of Christ. We cannot approve such things without breaking the second commandment; and therefore our Preachers are bound to rebuke these abuses."

To the opposite arguments on the second point, he replies:—

1. "The power of Bishops is granted. But it is not the less incumbent on Pastors and Preachers, by virtue of their ordinary vocation, to teach the truth, especially if the Bishops teach it not. Our Preachers, too, have admonished the Bishops, both in speech and writing, but in vain, and have only drawn down persecution on themselves. Therefore they should no longer wait for the commands of Bishops, any more than did Christ and the Apostles wait for orders from Annas and Caiaphas. Here applies the saying of the Apostles: 'God is to be obeyed rather than men.'"

2. "We deny that the Pope and clergy are the Church. For although there may be members of the Church among them, who do not consent to their errors, the Church consists of those who have the word of God, and are thereby cleansed, (Eph. v. 26,) and no others are the Church. The Holy Spirit also commands us to beware lest we acknowledge the Pope and clergy to be the Church; for He predicted, by St. Paul, that Antichrist would sit in the temple of God,—that is, in the Church,—and would assume His name; neither can that be the Church which God has not in subjection to Himself. We do not, therefore, fall away from the Church when we rebuke the errors of Antichrist; for we think the same as many did who lived under his tyranny, not having such clear knowledge on some points as we possess, and even true Christians have defects, and ought to pray, 'Forgive us our debts.' There have been many dissatisfied with the errors of Pontiffs, who yet lived

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under the Papacy, and were themselves a Church, while the Pope and clergy lived in manifest errors and crimes. Nor does it matter that in respect to certain outward things, such as fastings, and the like, we act differently from those who, in former times, were true Christians; for such things are not necessary to unity; and if they be held up as necessary, we must, both in word and deed, maintain the contrary."

3. "It was not our Preachers who gave occasion of insubordination and tumults, but the Pope and Bishops, who persecuted and excommunicated us, and refused to accept our obedience, unless we would deny the word of God. But the sentence they quote from Scripture is nothing to the point; for due obedience is what God requires, rejecting those victims which men offer of their own will, instead of the obedience due to the Divine word, as is expressly urged by Samuel. (1 Sam. xv. 20.)"

4. "The mention of charity towards the weak has no relevancy to the matter in hand; for the Papists are not weak, neither are their errors consistent with faith, like those of the weak brethren whom St. Paul commands to be instructed. But the Pope and Bishops are become enemies, persecutors, and tyrants; they will take no instruction, and must, therefore, be contradicted by all means."

5. "The Gospel must not be blamed for the war, but they who stir up wars against us."

On the last point the paper is more diffuse, recounting evidences from holy Scripture, that such wars are inevitable consequences of the preaching of the Gospel in any nation where its truths have not been previously acknowledged, and that the Evangelist is nevertheless bound to proclaim the truth. But then arises the question, "whether the Princes have done right in not only receiving the Gospel for themselves, but in permitting the abrogation of abuses, and refusing to tolerate the mass, and other superstitions, in colleges and monasteries." To this it is answered, that the Princes undoubtedly were in the right when they received the truth for themselves; and that, therefore, they were also in the right when they permitted the clergy to remove those abuses. And

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how could the Princes be justified in suffering the Reformers to be banished or put to death, if they acknowledged their doctrine to be true, and their proceedings consistent with the law of God? But even if the Princes doubted whether the teaching of the Reformers was right, they could not be justified in persecuting the Preachers merely because of doubt, much less in putting down by force what their conscience testified to be the truth.

Such was the compendium of the entire question between the Church of Rome and the Reformers; and we think it equally characteristic of the Reformation itself, and of Melancthon. It contains not a single vituperative sentence, but is marked, throughout, by the consciousness of moral power which distinguished those dissentients from the Church of Rome, and exhibits the scrupulous adherence to scriptural truth which gave authority to their apologetic sentence, and added incalculable power to their cause.

When we read, therefore, of the stern bearing of the Elector John, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the other Princes and delegates who went to Spire; when we hear that they celebrated Divine worship in their own way, just as in the churches of their states; when we observe that they did not this by stealth, but with entire publicity, and so far avowed their submission to the authority of holy Scripture as to have embroidered on their servants' livery the initial letters, V. D. M. I. Æ., (*Verbum Dei manet in Æternum*), "The word of God abideth for ever;"—we cannot but recur to the document now described, as a satisfactory exposition of the doctrine and principle of that holy religion which Melancthon had profoundly studied, and whereunto he now rendered unreserved submission.*

It does not appear that he was present in Spire during the Diet, but there his counsels reigned; the paper that he prepared was archived with the acts of the assembly; and the Grand Duke Ferdinand, appalled by their display of religious independence, yielded to the representatives of awakened Germany, set aside the sanguinary edict of

* Seckendorf, lib. ii., sect. 9.

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Worms, and left the awakened states and cities to follow the supreme authority of God's own law.

We may note that this Diet met on June 25th, 1526; a memorable date. On that day the newly-enlightened states of Germany assumed the characteristic position of defence,—not of resistance to Imperial authority, but of pacific unity,—associated by the exigence of a common peril, yet not tempted by any calculation of collective power to attack others, or to propagate by force of arms the newly-discovered liberty from priestly oppression. Most easily, indeed, might those united Princes have offered themselves as liberators of the people throughout the Empire, and headed a revolution that, if successful, would have extinguished the Western Empire, while yet the extinction of the Eastern was almost within the memory of living men. But the theologian and counselor whom the most impetuous Reformers revered, pronounced that great movement to be essentially spiritual, not an enterprise of ambition, not an outbreak of disloyalty, but an effort of conscience to be free. With him Luther unreservedly agreed.

PRACTICAL WISDOM.

Essentially political reformations are conducted by statesmen on thoroughly political principles. A revolt against principles of government of which the world is weary, must be consummated with unflinching vigour; and, had the Reformers been politicians, no sooner did the supreme power of the Empire waver than they would have pushed their advantage, without lingering for a moment, to the point of conquest. This may not always be the most prudent strategy; but it is that of revolutionists. For it is not in the nature of an insurrection of subjects, or a revolt of lieges against lords, to stop short in the very hour of success. All examples of history unite to show that the torrent of revolution usually carries away its promoters headlong by a necessity that cannot be resisted; for it is not in the nature of bold and sagacious rebels to refrain from snapping the rod of superior power just when it comes

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within reach, or to preach forbearance to the multitudes whose passions are as useful to them as their arms.

The Lutheran Reformation not being originally political, a very different course was to be taken, a course pointed out by an infinitely higher wisdom, and requiring a sublimer courage in the Reformers themselves. They felt bound, indeed, to resist the Emperor, the Popish Princes, the Clergy, and the Court of Rome; and, having openly and unitedly resisted, they were willing to throw away carnal weapons, and confide only—so to speak—in “the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.” If we regard this abnegation in the light of mere worldly wisdom, we must at once confess that it was not to be commended. But if we acknowledge other principles, and allow that purely religious considerations actuated Melancthon and his brethren, with the soldiers and Magistrates who placed themselves under their guidance, we are certain to arrive at an opposite conclusion.

They strove after a moral victory, and therefore their only safety lay in the acceptance of a Divine law. They looked for help from Heaven, and were therefore necessitated to keep their hands clean and their conscience clear. Just after the Diet of Spire, the Landgrave of Hesse consulted Melancthon concerning a Reformation to be sanctioned by authority in his own state. The advice which Melancthon gave him suggests the observations I have now written, and conveys, far more distinctly than any laboured justification could, an assurance that he who gave, and they who took, such counsel, were not to be confounded with political revolutionists, even of the best class. The advice was, briefly, such as this:—

“The ceremonies, vain though they be, should not be abolished at a stroke, lest you offend against charity, and do more harm than good. Even the Latin chants may be used at proper times, the Sunday lessons, and the observance of feast-days. The mass, however,—or say, rather, the Lord’s Supper,—should only be celebrated once on the same day in the same parish. Private masses, performed in monasteries by order, or for pay, should be utterly abolished; and we may hope that this will be done without causing any disturbance. The

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singing of 'canonical hours,' but not to saints, may still be suffered. Disputes between Preachers, not only disputes of Evangelicals with Papists, but of Evangelicals between themselves, ought to be avoided by all means; for they are often extremely contemptible. Not only should faith be taught in public, but the fear of God, charity, and obedience to the Magistrate.

"Let the Prince abstain from taking up arms in the cause of the Gospel; for certainly God will scatter the people who delight in war, as was proved in the peasant war last year." And this, adds Melancthon, he is now the more careful to write explicitly, because he knows that there are some who urge the Landgrave, and other Princes, to undertake some sudden hostile operation, or, at least, to raise an army in readiness.*

How far, however, this tenderness as to ceremonies may have been hurtful to those who stood still in the path of reformation, instead of advancing as they should have done, and how far Lutheranism itself has failed to satisfy other Churches in its ritual and spirit, are questions worthy of consideration.

VISITATION OF CLERGY.

By the recess of Spire, the evangelical Christians of Saxony found themselves, for the first time, free from Imperial prohibition, and hastened to make the best use of their opportunity for establishing some degree of discipline among the newly-emancipated clergy. Emancipation from canon law could not qualify the men for the discharge of parochial duties; but sudden liberty might be an occasion of confusion and licentiousness without bound. In the absence of any standard of doctrine, each one undertook to assail Popery in his own way, which was often so ridiculously bad, that the attempt must have seemed like that of a devil to cast out devils. One teacher insisted on a single article, forgetting all beside; and, by exhibiting a part of the truth as if it were the whole, exaggerated that into a particular heresy. All agreed in casting off canonical restraint; but

* Seckendorf, lib. ii., sect. 8.

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very few entered into that higher liberty which is ready to bear the yoke of spiritual obedience, and to associate itself with superior strength. Even those who began to understand the truth and love it for its own sake, and would have courted the protection of ecclesiastical discipline, had none to whom they could apply for guidance. The Bishops held aloof, Luther was but a Presbyter, and Melancthon a layman. In the absence, therefore, of any ecclesiastical authority to make a visitation of the clergy, displace unfit persons, and recommend articles of faith, or prescribe a form of worship, it appeared to Luther and his friends that their only resort lay in an application to the Elector for a visitation of the electorate. Luther guarded his application by affirming that the Elector had no right to inspect or govern the clergy, in respect of doctrine and spiritual duties; but he nevertheless implored him, "for the love of God," to sanction a visitation.

Necessity was urgent. The clergy might refuse to place themselves under the control of Luther; and, assuredly, he would not be justified in assuming such control, at least without obtaining the previous consent of his fellow-Presbyters, a consent which he could scarcely ask, and which they did not offer. A commission, then, by authority of the Elector, met the exigency of the moment. Similar expedients were generally resorted to, both on the Continent and in England; and so far as the civil Magistrate lent his authority to the maintenance of the truth, we must acknowledge that he did well. Hitherto, the Church of Rome had used the Magistrate to do the servile work of persecution, and, at the bidding of an Inquisitor or a Bishop, he had been compelled to imprison, banish, or burn the heretic. Now, at the request of the leading Reformers, both clerks and laymen, the Elector of Saxony undertook to inspect and govern the Church within his territory.

The ancient precedent of Imperial interference was bad: the present acceptance of it, however necessary, was of doubtful tendency. We merely relate it as it stands among the facts of history. In our time and country it is not so difficult to define the boundary that separates

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the protection of the civil power from its internal government of the Church; but it is easy only by help of our clearer views of Christian loyalty and Christian liberty.

A first visitation was made in the latter part of 1527; and on return of the visitors, the Elector sanctioned a "Libellus Visitatorius," or manual for visitors, and directory for the clergy in general, from the pen of Melancthon. Luther, no doubt, suggested the contents, and also wrote a preface, and revised the manuscript. The subjects on which it appeared most necessary to impart instruction were treated in eighteen chapters, by far too miscellaneous for such a work,* but containing a large mass of theological truth, set forth with extreme caution, and with some alloy of error not as yet unlearned. There was no declamation against known errors; but, avoiding direct controversy, the writer confined himself to the necessary work of teaching the Preachers, whose duty was now to enlighten the people, rather than to contend with the Church that had so long held them fast in chains of darkness.

Luther approved the book, understanding and appreciating the wisdom of the writer; but some others mistook silence on certain points for concession. John Agricola, a Preacher at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, cried out

* The chapters were on the following subjects:—1. *Doctrine*, comprehending repentance, contrition, faith. 2. *Law*, specially the precepts of the Decalogue. 3. *Prayer*, addressed to God alone, according to the second commandment. 4. *The Cross*, tribulation to be borne patiently. 5. *Baptism*, to be administered to infants, and in the language of the people. 6. *The Eucharist*, teaching the Lutheran doctrine of a real presence. 7. *Repentance and Contrition*, to be inculcated without dogmatical refinements. 8. *Confession*, but not as performed by Papists. 9. *Satisfaction*, not by the works of men, but by the merit of Christ. 10. *Festivals*, retaining several, but rejecting the greater number of saints' days. 11. *Marriage*, to be contracted in conformity to the laws of the state. 12. *Free Will*. 13. *Christian Liberty*. 14. *War with the Turks*, which is justified. 15. *Preaching*, for edification, not for strife. 16. *Excommunication*, which is allowed. 17. *Superintendents*, to direct the Pastors of their dioceses. 18. *Schools*, for teaching Latin and German.—For the purpose, this book was too diffuse; but it was a first attempt. Not so the Homilies distributed by the visitors sent over England in the reign of Edward VI. They were drawn up by Cranmer, in a style more popular and pointed.

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that Melancthon was lukewarm. Many fervid or artful Romanists believed, or pretended to believe, that both he and Luther surrendered the points on which they thought it useless to contend when writing for the instruction of those who had already rejected the old errors.*

Nor did the misapprehension end here. Invidious commendations were heaped upon Melancthon by multitudes who heard say that he had begun to retract his former profession of adherence to Gospel truth; and even the King of Bohemia, who had put to death several confessors of that truth, did not hesitate to invite him to Prague, to persuade the suffering brethren to return to the Church of Rome. "Faber," writes Melancthon to his friend Camerarius, "sends me a letter from Bohemia, exhorting me to forsake this cause. He offers me a price for my defection, and advises me to make terms with King Ferdinand. Because I have been so very moderate" (*ἐναικείστερος*) "in my little book for the inspection of the churches, he takes it for granted that I am giving up my ground. Yet you see that I have written nothing in that book but what Luther himself has continually taught. And yet, because I have written without asperity of language, those acute men judge that I dissent from Luther."

To men who use hard words in controversy, bringing out the natural product of a bad heart, moderation is as unintelligible as are honesty, truth, and kindness to a Patagonian. But nothing could provoke our theologian to answer the fool according to his folly, and thus to become like unto him. When the Anabaptists raved against the Christian baptism of infants, and with characteristic profanity called it "a dog's bath," he took up his pen and wrote a tract with perfect self-possession, drew the argument from holy Scripture, and thence affirmed that "those children being commended unto God, are received into His favour, sanctified and kept by Him. For although they cannot yet make use of reason, God can act upon them in a manner suited to their infancy. Even in mature age, it is not reason that produces Chris-

* The fullest and best account of this visitation, and all relating to it, is given by Seckendorf, lib. ii., sect. 13.

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tian righteousness ; but it is God, who strikes His fear into the heart, and convinces those of sin whom He calls to repentance, raises up again, and justifies by faith. The Holy Spirit wrought on John when as yet he was unborn ; and even so can other elect children, without the aid of reason, be sanctified by the Holy Spirit."

I do not stay to animadvert on the extraneous notion of election, but venture to offer these otherwise admirable sentences as exemplifying the style of one of the most effective antagonists of error that later times have known.

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Solyman the Magnificent was now the scourge and terror of Europe. His conquests in Hungary opened a way for his Turks into the heart of the Empire ; Vienna quaked with rumour of his approach ; and Charles V., Emperor of the West, reviewing the advance of Moham-medan power since the day when Constantine, last Emperor of the East, fell among the slain at Constantinople, saw that nothing could save his own imperial city, Vienna, but the aggregation of a force powerful enough to resist Solyman. He therefore convened a Diet at Ratisbon, to assemble in the month of April, 1528, and provide contingents from all the states, in defence of Christianity, as he would say, and the Empire.

The evangelical Princes, no less than the others, would have gladly appeared at Ratisbon, and contributed men and money to resist the common enemy, if an alarm had not been raised of a conspiracy of their Papistical * neighbours to put them down by force. One Pack, formerly Vice-Chancellor of Duke George of Saxony, who, unlike the Elector John, was a bitter enemy of the Lutherans, pretended to divulge an astounding secret. He was a clever person, but not eminent for honesty, and needy. On the 18th of February, he showed the Landgrave of Hesse a document purporting to be an agreement between Duke George, Ferdinand, the King of Bohemia, and seven other Princes, to unite in league against

* *Papistical* is the term employed to signify adherence to the particular interests of the Papacy.

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John (called) King of Hungary, the Elector, and other adherents of the Lutheran heresy. There were reasons to doubt the authenticity of the document, although fortified with the seal of Duke George; and the earnestness of Pack to obtain a handsome sum of money for a copy might have raised suspicion of his honesty; yet even if it was a forgery, there does appear some reason to believe that Pack had obtained information of such an intention, although not reduced to any definitive agreement. The tale came with all the force of truth to the mind of the Elector and his friends, who immediately proceeded to form a compact in self-defence.

The fraud of Pack was detected, and the hostile preparation suspended; but this temporary attitude of hostility prevented the assemblage of the Diet at Ratisbon; and it was not until November 11th that the Emperor convened a Diet to meet at Spire. The assemblage took place there in April, 1529.

During several months Germany had been in great confusion, and civil war seemed imminent; but Luther invited Œcolampadius and Melancthon to join him in counsel, and all three agreed to discourage the precipitation of the Princes, advising them to exercise forbearance towards their enemies, put faith in God, and not raise an army until they saw some hostile movement on the other side. As for Melancthon, he deplored the threatenings, as he understood, of the adversaries, and the intemperance of many whose adherence was a grief to him. "Our danger," he writes to Baumgartner, a senator of Nuremberg, (July 21st, 1528,) "is lest some should give themselves out for Evangelicals, as you have often known such persons to do, attach themselves to us, and take delight in throwing everything into confusion. But I would rather that this violence should spend itself on us, the shepherds, as they call us, than on the flock."

Melancthon, with some other theologians, accompanied the Princes to Spire, and reached the town on the day before Palm-Sunday (March 20th, 1529). On the Monday following, they heard a mandate of the Emperor, "altogether terrific," abrogating the tolerant decree of

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the preceding Diet, and denouncing many heavy penalties on all who refused obedience to the new edict.

Our theologian and his friends obtained lodgings in a small house belonging to a poor Priest, who paid them as much civility as he durst. The great men of the Empire, attended by formidable retinues, displayed much pomp; and it was observed that Prelates came in larger number than at any Diet ever known, drawn by a two-fold zeal against heretics and Turks. The Saxon innovators could not but mark the scowls of those "chief Priests," and read indications of hatred and malice in their features. "May Christ look upon us, and save His poor people," prayed Melancthon; "for it is clear enough we are no better than filth and off-scouring in this city." Neither did he conceal his grief that many reputed Evangelicals so conducted themselves, as to bring discredit on the religion they professed; while their antagonists, nothing better, took advantage of every indiscretion to damage the good cause.

The Pope's Legate, John Thomas, Count of Miranda, offered men and money to help in war against the Turks, declaimed against war between Christian Sovereigns, especially the Emperor and the King of France, and discoursed concerning schism. At length, on the 15th of April, the majority of the Diet passed an edict to the effect, that wherever the edict of Worms—that sanguinary proscription of the Reformation—was received, it should not be lawful for any one to change his religion; but in places where a new religion had been exercised, it might be continued until the next Council, provided that the old religion could not be restored without peril of sedition. The mass was no more to be abolished, nor "Catholics" prevented from exercising their own religion, nor even allowed to embrace Lutheranism. Sacramentarians (that is, followers of Zuinglius) were forbidden the Empire. Anabaptists were to be killed. Preachers were not to expound the Gospel in any other sense than that authorized by the Church.

Against this edict six Lutheran Princes and fourteen free cities made a protest in full assembly, and delivered the same in writing on the 20th of April, duly signed.

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The firmness of these men so far impressed the dominant faction, that they retracted their own sentence of placing the disobedient under the ban of the Empire, and endeavoured to contrive some compromise. But many limitations on points of worship and ecclesiastical discipline were proposed, which the condemned party could not accept; who, therefore, after fruitless discussion, left their protest and withdrew. These were *the Protestants*.^{*} Their brethren in England did not receive this name, but were still distinguished as Gospellers; a higher designation, certainly, and more exactly descriptive of Christians, with whom the occasion for *protest* ceases when they are set free from entanglement with the particular body against whose authoritative acts it was once necessary to make a protestation.

As for the Protest, the messengers who carried it, or rather an appeal to Cæsar, to be presented to His Majesty in Italy, were put under arrest, and after some time dismissed in anger, without any direct reply.[†]

From the false alarm of Vice-Chancellor Pack, up to the last day of the debates at Spire, a heavy burden of care lay on Melancthon. At Spire the political contest was rendered unspeakably more difficult by a controversy, which greatly delighted their common enemies, between the Lutherans and the Sacramentarians. The former believed in something not very remote from transubstantiation; and the latter entertained views of the eucharist that, to the divines of Wittenberg, seemed injurious to the sacredness of the sacrament. Into this controversy he was compelled to go, lamenting its unseasonable introduction, and striving to convince the dissentient brethren that his concern for charity was not weaker than his zeal for what he conceived to be the truth. A letter that he addressed from Spire to Ecolampadius, an old friend, yet antagonist in this controversy, is a beautiful example of Christian gentleness, but firm withal, and contains a proposal to call together a few "good men," who might confer

^{*} Maimburg., lib. ii., sect. 14, 15, apud Seckendorf. P. Melancth. Consilia, &c. Christoph. Pezelii, Neustadii, 1600.

[†] Joan. Sleidan. Comment. de Stat. Relig., lib. vii.

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amicably on the question without allowing any altercation.* This was afterwards done.

Before quitting Spire, we must hear Melancthon himself relate an incident very characteristic of all parties concerned, which his lively imagination invested with an air of spiritual mystery. He inserts the anecdote in his Commentary on the Tenth Chapter of the Book of Daniel, as illustrative of the ministry of angels.

"As I write these words,—('The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.' It is, therefore, certain that God has given angels to His church, to be our keepers, that we may not fear any bodily dangers when we are performing our duty,)—certain examples of our own time occur to my memory. And although I might relate many narratives of honest and trustworthy men who are yet alive, I will recount one only, concerning Simon Grynæus, who added to excellent learning and virtue profound reverence towards God, and especially detested the philosophy of those who fancy themselves so much clearer-sighted than others, that they either presume to despise all religion, or dispute, like Pyrrho, on opposite sides of every question."

Grynæus, it appears, had come from Heidelberg to visit Melancthon at Spire, where he heard Faber, Bishop of Vienna, defend some absurdities of superstition in a sermon, followed the Bishop on his way to his lodgings, and remonstrated with him for condescending to teach what he could not possibly believe. Scarcely had Grynæus returned to his company than an old man, never seen by Melancthon before nor after that moment, came to give information of the King's intention to throw Grynæus into prison. The old man disappeared; and Grynæus escaped across the Rhine. Scarcely had he left the house when the officers came to take him, and Melancthon believed that the unknown old man was an angel in human form, sent of God for the deliverance of his friend.†

Undoubtedly this must be regarded as an interposition of Providence; and, without exalting the unknown person

* *Declamat.*, tom. iii., p. 416.

† *P. Melancth. Opp.*, tom. ii., p. 476.

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to the dignity of "angel of Spire," we cordially assent to the persuasion of Melancthon that this deliverance was divinely wrought. And not less clearly might we infer from his narrative what was the temper prevalent at Spire. If the King of the Romans could authorize the imprisonment of a man for using a little plainness of speech to a Preacher in private conversation, what of justice or generosity could be expected of the Diet acting under his control?

Not without cause, then, did the Protestant theologian sometimes display anxiety, and even perturbation; but when Camerarius once begged him to cast off his cares, he wisely and piously replied, "If I had no care, I should never call on God for help; but when I offer prayer, there is an end of care."

Amidst those anxieties, he had to discharge a filial duty by going from Spire to Bretten to visit his aged mother, just on the verge of death, and cheer her with gentle counsels, like those wherewith he was then softening the rudeness of controversy, restraining the impetuosity of his friends, and baffling the craft of his enemies. The devout matron shared the light which then dawned like morning on the mountains, yet she could not be unconcerned for the issue of controversies in which her son was involved so deeply, and she poured out her prayers before God with the earnestness of one who felt herself close upon the threshold of eternity. Philip heard those prayers, with satisfaction that they were free from the weakness and taint of superstition. "But what," she asked him, "am I to believe in the midst of all this controversy?" "Go on, my mother," he answered, "to believe and pray, just as you have believed and prayed until this moment, and do not suffer these disputes to trouble you." Either then, or soon afterwards, she departed in peace.

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Melancthon, in a letter to Ecolampadius, had proposed that a few good men should meet and converse on the chief point in dispute between the Lutherans and the

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Reformed,—the manner of the presence of Christ in the eucharist. The proposal was favourably entertained by several, but less by Luther than some others. Melancthon began to fear angry disputation when the time for conference drew near; but Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, himself inclined to the doctrine of Zuinglius, and, moreover, anxious to unite all the seceders from Romanism in one body, spared no effort to bring the chief men of both parties together.

On the 1st day of October, 1529, Luther, attended by Melancthon, Justus Jonas, and three eminent Preachers, on the one side, Zuinglius, with Ecolampadius, Bucer, and Hedio, on the other, met at Marburg, a town in the Hessian territory, and were entertained by the Landgrave himself in a style of royal magnificence. The two parties reviewed the chief articles of doctrine and practice, as observed in their respective Churches, and came to a substantial agreement on them all, except that relating to the sacramental question, which was reserved until the last. On that they recorded their dissent from the Romish teaching of transubstantiation, and from the false worship of the mass; acknowledged their inability to arrive at a perfect agreement; but professed a determination to follow after charity towards each other. This is all that needs be said of the Marburg Conference, in which Melancthon took no leading part, except that he held one discussion with Zuinglius in private.* It was at Augsburg that he rendered a service to the Reformation alone sufficient to perpetuate his memory.

* The student who desires to master the history of this controversy, —a controversy that tended so directly to weaken the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and that still divides the evangelical churches of continental Europe,—may find abundance of material in the writings of one who felt deeply concerned in it, on the Zuinglian side. *Historiæ Sacramentaræ Pars altera: De Origine et Progressu Controversiæ Sacramentaræ de Cœnâ Domini inter Lutheranos, Ubiquistas et Orthodoxos, quos Zuinglianos seu Calvinistas vocant, exortæ, ab Anno nati in carne Christi Salvatoris MDCVII. usque ad Annum MDCII., deducta, &c. Rodolpho Hospiniano Tigurino Auctore. Tiguri, MDCII.*

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After the young Emperor, Charles V., had released the bearers of the Protestant appeal from their arrest, and dismissed them at Piacenza, he made a magnificent entry into Bologna, there to pay his respects to Pope Clement VII., as his superior,* to confer with him on affairs of state, and to receive at his hand the crown of the holy Roman Empire. Clement welcomed his visiter with every mark of honour. They lodged in the same palace, slept in neighbouring apartments, and observed a domestic familiarity altogether unusual, for the space of four months. They consulted for the peace of Italy, miserably exhausted by the assaults of foreign foes, especially the Germans, and torn with dissensions between the states. They contrived measures for making war upon the Turks. Then they considered what means could be most effectually employed to overpower the German heretics, and chiefly gave attention to the demand of the Protestants for a General Council. On this last point their views and wishes were altogether different. The Pope, for his part, raised innumerable difficulties against a Council. The points of doctrine, he affirmed, which the Protestants wished to have examined anew, were already determined by many Councils, and to those Councils the Protestants ought to pay obedience. Abuses, he acknowledged, might have crept into discipline and worship; but he, as head of the Church, was the authority from whom they should ask a remedy. As for calling a Council at that particular time, he saw many insuperable difficulties. But even if there were no such difficulties, the Protestants would not acknowledge it, unless it were held in their own manner, which would be contrary to the laws of the Church.

Such a handful of rebels, Clement suggested, his son Charles, as protector of the Church, might recall to their duty by his own power. Not that he (the Pope) had any dread of a Council; for he knew that the Bishops,

* Guicciardini, lib. xix. This was on the 5th of November, 1529.

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of whom a Council must consist, could never do anything against the authority of their head; unless, indeed, they would expose themselves to the insults and violence of their adversaries, and work out their own destruction. Yet, all this notwithstanding, he declared himself willing to convoke a Council, if it should be thought necessary for the welfare of the Church.

These objections of the Pope were not so confidentially communicated to the Emperor, but that the Protestants gained intelligence of his reluctance; and they urged their demand in proportion as they saw him shrink from it; insisting, with great reason, on the agreement of the first Diet of Spire, which allowed them to continue evangelical preaching and reformed worship until the assemblage of a Council.

Charles, for his part, neither wished to undertake a civil war for the sake of religion, as the "Shepherd of shepherds" exhorted him to do, nor had he any inclination for what the Protestants demanded. Rather he desired a general assembly of the States of the Empire, over which he, not the Pope, would preside, and where he might unite the dismembered sections of his dominions either by persuasion or by force. If that failed, he might have recourse to a Council in the last resort; but, meanwhile, at least, he thought it possible to compel the dissidents to submit until the assembly they desired could be summoned. Nor was the judgment of Charles uninfluenced by that of some others, and especially of the Cardinal Gattinara, his own Chancellor, who entertained a firm conviction that the Church needed reformation, and advised his Imperial master to make use of his own power, summon a Diet, and there do what could never be expected from the clergy. Gattinara, however, died some days before the Diet was opened at Augsburg, and the young Emperor fell entirely under the fascination of the Pontiff and his train.

In Bologna he received the crown on February 24th, 1530; and, in the ceremony of coronation, bound himself "to be perpetual defender of the Pontifical dignity and the Roman Church, with all his power, skill, and wealth; to make no inroad on ecclesiastical liberty, but to pre-

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serve and protect the power, jurisdiction, and dominion of the Church, so far as in him lay."

Already, on January 21st, Charles had issued his writ to convene all the orders of the Empire to a Diet at Augsburg on the 8th of April, there to deliberate for ending all discord in matters of religion, and joining all their forces against the Turk. This was a direct challenge to the Protestant states to maintain their ground, unless they would surrender at once the claims of conscience, and leave their subjects to be treated as abandoned and condemned heretics.

How to maintain their ground was the question; and if the Princes had been left to decide it for themselves, they would certainly have completed the hostile preparations begun on occasion of Pack's imposture, and declared war. But Luther, first of all men, interposed his dissuasion. He maintained that the cause of religion was not to be promoted by worldly weapons, but by sound arguments, Christian patience, and strong faith in God. He wrote seasonable instructions for circulation among the people, and translated into German verse the forty-sixth Psalm, *Ein feste berg ist unser Gott*, to this hour repeated with enthusiasm throughout Germany, just as it was then sung in all the Lutheran churches during the sittings of the Diet.*

Melancthon was of one heart and mind with his noble friend; and as Luther was restrained from going to Augsburg by the fears of the citizens, as well as by the prudence of the Elector, who thought that his presence there might be mistaken for a signal of defiance, he took up his abode in the castle of Coburg, while John of Saxony went forward with the whole body of Saxon nobility, and one hundred and sixty horsemen well armed in splendid livery, a train suited to his rank as first of the Electors of the Empire, attended also by Justus Jonas, George Spalatin, and Philip Melancthon. The Prince Albert of Mansfeld took John Agricola, also; but the responsibility of representing the Evangelical doctrine at the Diet weighed most heavily on Melancthon.

* Seckendorf, lib. ii., sect. 19—21. Even the Jesuit Maimbourg admires this.

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thon, whose reputation, activity, and excellence drew the attention of both parties almost exclusively upon himself.

The Elector and his train first of all others entered Augsburg, (May 2d, 1530,) the other Princes, secular and ecclesiastical, quickly followed, and the theologians forthwith prepared to "give a reason of the hope that was in them." Luther had written a brief statement of doctrine in seventeen Articles; but, on examination, that was not found sufficient for such a great occasion, and Melancthon was requested to devote himself to the single occupation of writing a Confession of Faith for presentation to the Emperor and Princes in solemn assembly. Such a document the Imperial writ required them to produce. Strasburg and three other Imperial cities sent another Confession, and Zuinglius a third, as these all differed from the Lutherans in regard to the eucharist.

The correspondence* of our theologian himself supplies copious information concerning this most important period of his life, and assists us to fix our eye on him as the personage in whom we are chiefly interested.

More than six weeks were spent at Augsburg before the Emperor made his appearance, delays, as usual, consuming time. Meanwhile the hopes and fears of the Protestants alternated at every breath of rumour from the moving Court of Charles V., whom some were advising to make an end of the Reformation at a stroke, without giving its advocates a hearing. One strong decree, they thought, would be sufficient to do that. To those furious incentives were opposed the reasonings of the Emperor's most esteemed counsellor, the aged Cardinal Mercurino Alborio di Gattinara, a wise and learned man, who followed the Emperor with extreme difficulty; but devoted the last days of his life to an effort to save Germany from a war of religion, advising that the Protestants should be fairly heard, and the vices of the Church corrected. He pointed out to his young master the futility of the violent measures attempted at Worms, by an edict that it was found impossible to execute in

* Collected by Pezelius under the title of "*Historica quedam scripta à Phil. Mel. ad Amicos de actis in Conventu Augustano, 1530.*"

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the dissentient states, and which had only given occasion to atrocious cruelties elsewhere. Having discharged this duty, Gattinara expired, without seeing Augsburg.

Cheered by hearing of this friendly voice, our evangelical confessor persevered with his labour day and night, striving to produce a Confession without a single sentence to irritate the adversary, even if it did not convince. "I do not think," he said, "that we can employ any milder language.....I make alterations daily, and we must make others as occasion calls. It is a Confession, not an Apology; for Cæsar cannot be expected to listen to prolix disputations; but I have said all that seemed necessary to defend ourselves or to instruct our enemies. With this view I have included almost every article of faith, considering that Eck has published the most malignant calumnies (*διαβολικωτάτας διαβολάς*) to our prejudice. Against those I desire to provide a remedy." A copy he transmitted to Luther for revision in his retreat at Coburg, who returned it with a letter of unqualified approbation, saying that Dr. Martin could not have spoken so gently, but that the force of truth was not impaired in any point essential.

Thus recording the sentence of Luther, and regarding Melancthon as innocent of all subterfuge, and altogether superior to temporizing, I cannot refrain from noting some imperfections in this Confession of Augsburg. The entire system of Gospel truth was not clear to the apprehension of Melancthon himself, as a remarkable correspondence with Luther on traditions at this very time witnesses; and the object of the document was not only to expound doctrines, but also to conciliate Inquisitors, and to disarm the stronger half of the Empire against the weaker. It was prepared amidst extreme distraction and anxiety, an anxiety that was often mistaken for irresolution; the writer felt himself more than half deserted by persons who ought to have trusted his integrity; and, as Camerarius relates, he was once found weeping in secret under a burden of grief heavier than he could bear.

About eight o'clock in the evening of June 15th, the Imperial *cortége* entered Augsburg, presenting such a

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spectacle of magnificence as the Empire had never seen before ; for never had there been so full a representation of the Empire at any Diet. Electors, Princes ecclesiastical and secular, each followed by his own train of horsemen, varying in number and costume according to the rank and place of each, went out to meet their lord. With him and his brother Ferdinand came a thousand noblemen and upwards, from Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary. Mounted on a stately white charger, Charles V. attracted every eye. He was then thirty years of age, of a noble figure, and, at such a moment, of agreeable countenance, expressing mingled gravity and benevolence. Melancthon took a humble place among the spectators, and received so favourable an impression from that first appearance, that he afterwards described the Cæsar in terms almost extravagant, as if he had seen one of those immortal heroes or demigods who in olden times were wont to sojourn amongst mortal men. What Horace wrote of Augustus, he thought might much more appropriately have been written of his own good Cæsar :—

*“ Quo nihil majus, meliusve terris
Fata donavere, bonique Divi ;
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum
Tempora priscum.”*

Happy the complacent and simple-minded theologian whom that exalted presence could so charm ! The Senators of Augsburg, attired in Spanish costume, in honour of His Majesty, who was a Spaniard by birth and language, bore a silken canopy over his head. Behind him rode Ferdinand, King of the Romans, Cardinal Campeggio, the Pope's Legate, and a train of cavaliers, gorgeously apparelled. After these, three other Cardinals, on white mules, led a multitude of prelates, Italian signori, and grandees from Spain. On each side of the Emperor, as the cavalcade advanced very slowly, a crowd of youths, sons of the Electors, Dukes, Counts, and Marquises of the Empire, went on foot, the Protestant Elector of Saxony riding a little in advance, and bearing the sword of state, as was his privilege, with another Elector on his right hand, and a Baron on his left. The Augs-

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burg militia, three or four thousand in number, lined the way, cannon roared from the city-walls, and bells rang in all the towers. A procession at the cathedral, music, and a Pontifical benediction by the Legate, closed the day; and the Saxons went back to their lodgings for graver contemplations.

Before they could well put off their swords, a summons from the Emperor called them to the Bishop's palace, where he was entertained; and there King Ferdinand, in his presence,—perhaps because he could not speak German,—made two demands: first, that the Protestant Princes, whose Preachers had occupied the pulpits of the Dominican and Franciscan churches, should put those Preachers to silence; and, secondly, that they should attend His Majesty the next day, in the procession of Corpus Christi.

Judging from the entrance of the Emperor on the eve of Corpus Christi day, that it was intended to embarrass them by requiring their presence in the accustomed procession, as at a state ceremony, they had required the advice of Melancthon and his brethren; and on that advice they acted now. George, Marquis of Brandenburg, answering for the rest, plainly refused, in a speech of great earnestness. Kneeling before Cæsar, and laying his hand on his neck, he concluded with these words: "I would rather lay my head upon the block than deny God and His holy Gospel, and give countenance to a false and erroneous doctrine." Neither would they witness the idolatrous procession, but by their absence gave an earnest of the constancy they were determined to maintain on all occasions; and although Charles walked bare-headed in the scorching sun, and no effort was spared to make the spectacle attractive, it did not begin until two hours past the time appointed, and scarcely a hundred of the inhabitants were in the streets. Imperial, military, and ecclesiastical authorities joined in the pageantry of the day; but not so the citizens of Augsburg.

Three days were now spent in discussing the question of sermons; and, after full consideration, Melancthon wrote the sentence by which the Elector and

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his friends were guided. Against the Emperor's *request*, the Elector might very submissively expostulate, alleging the reasons why those who had separated from the Romish worship should not be deprived of the accustomed services of their religion. If Cæsar *forbade public sermons*, but allowed the delivery of discourses in the lodgings of the Princes, it would be right for them to submit, surrender the churches, and be satisfied with the word of God, even in private. If he *suppressed preaching absolutely*, they should submit, being deprived of liberty, and not attempt a resistance that would neither be lawful nor effectual. Luther confirmed this judgment; and the Emperor, influenced by the firmness, loyalty, and courtesy of the Protestants, who rendered to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, and to God the things that were God's, silenced all Preachers in Augsburg without exception, and only permitted the Priests to read prayers.

The presentation of the "Apology," or, as it was afterwards more properly called, the "Confession," may almost be regarded as the greatest event in the life of Philip Melancthon, and should therefore be described clearly.

After the first day of the session, John, Elector of Saxony, dismissed all his attendants, and spent some time in the morning in private prayer and reflection. Then it was that he wrote down the rules of conduct which he purposed to follow throughout the contest. After this retirement, he sent for his son John Frederic, Duke of Saxony, Pontanus his Chancellor, and Melancthon, and discoursed on the subject that engaged all their cares. At noon he assembled the other Protestant Princes, had the "Proposition," or manifesto of the Emperor, read aloud, and deliberated on the course to be pursued next day in Diet, on the commencement of debate. All agreed that they would not consent to treat of any other subject before that of religion.

On the 22d day of June, Charles sent to the Elector, and those of his party, requesting them to present a written statement of their faith, and a list of abuses in religion, on the 24th. The document being read in a meeting of

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their own on the 23d, they determined to request that it should be read with like solemnity in the Diet.

The session of that day was opened with much ceremony. Cæsar, attended by all the Electors and Princes, went to meet the Legate Campeggio at the entrance, who spoke first, pronouncing an elaborate Latin oration on heresy and war,—the Saxons and the Turks. The answer of ceremony being given by a Bishop, and some other formality dispatched, the Elector of Saxony and his friends rose in a body, and Pontanus humbly prayed the Emperor, in their name, to permit a confession of their faith to be read publicly, before all the orders of the Empire, that those who, being ill-informed of their religion, attributed to them heretical and scandalous opinions which they had never entertained, might be relieved of their mistake. At first Charles resisted the request, wishing to receive the writing in his own hand, and deal with it afterwards at his own discretion; but the Chancellor repeated the request twice or thrice. A deep circle of prelates, headed by the Cardinal, beset the Emperor, and would fain have seen the paper buried in his grasp; but the importunity of the Chancellor and the consent of the laity prevailed.

The clerical dignitaries, however, saving such as were cumbered with principalities, would not brook the hearing of heresy: the reading was deferred until the morrow; and then Charles, and the orders of the Empire, assembled to hear it in a private apartment of the palace, capable of accommodating two hundred persons. The Elector and his friends stood up to hear; but the Emperor bade them be seated. Pontanus produced a Latin copy, and Bayer, another Chancellor, exhibited a German version. Yielding to the wish of the Elector, Cæsar consented, as they were in Germany, to hear the latter, although he could not understand it: but all else could; and in a clear and slow voice, so loud that it was audible to a plebeian audience in the palace-yard, Bayer instructed the illustrious company before him in the essential doctrines of the Gospel.

The two copies were then presented to Cæsar, who chose the Latin, and, graciously dismissing the assembly,

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promised to deliberate upon the matter. The Bishop of Augsburg, it was reported, said afterwards, "We cannot deny that what we have heard recited is true; nay, it is the truth itself."

Frequent letters from Melancthon conveyed to Luther and other friends intelligence of hopes and fears awakened by varying rumours. Valdez, secretary of the Emperor, had seen the Confession before its presentation; but the writer was surprised, after all his care to avoid the least offensive syllable, to hear him pronounce it such a document as the contrary party would never suffer. Day after day passed by; but no answer came from Cæsar, nor any from the Diet. Report said that His Majesty would require everything relating to religion to be restored to its former state, until a Council could sit and give definitive decrees. George, Duke of Saxony, was suspected of advising this; and any one might conjecture what commotion would follow the promulgation of such an edict. Next came the whisper of a contumelious refutation of the Confession, soon to be produced, laying on the Lutherans the blame of the rustic war, and all the calamities of Germany. Thus placed on the defensive, they would be required to abide by the decision of Cæsar; and if they would not abandon themselves to a judge whose enmity was already manifest, their worship was to be prohibited, and their faith declared criminal. Nay, it became certain that all this was actually determined, nothing but the Imperial assent remaining to make it valid. But the unwillingness of the Bishop of Mentz, and some others, to allow religious questions to be discussed, even in Council, retarded its promulgation.

At length (August 3d) a paper, purporting to be a confutation of the Lutheran Confession, was read in full Diet, and approved by the Romish members. Their approbation, however, was not considered as a tribute to any force of argument or elegance of composition; and, although they knew that the Confession itself would not be kept secret by its authors, they refused to allow the Lutherans a copy of this refutation, except under the condition that none should see it but themselves. This

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restriction they refused, and left the "refutation" to be buried in oblivion. Cochläus, who was present, confesses that the Lutherans laughed during the reading of it by one Alexander, a German secretary.* Then Charles, turning to the Elector and his friends, required them to assent to the vote of the majority, accept the confutation, and renounce their faith. If not, he said, he would prove himself Defender of the Church, and see that Germany was not troubled with schismatics. "A cruel sentence," says Melancthon; "but the confutation was written so childishly that, on hearing that, we were wondrously delighted."

Charles and his Princes, perceiving that the exorbitant threat had produced no impression, (for it was manifestly impossible to carry it into execution,) began to listen to proposals of conciliation, such as a conference between equal numbers of Princes, councillors, and theologians, to settle the controversies of the Church; but Melancthon shrank from the idea of committing his faith to the issue of a debate.

Yet he spared no effort to disarm the adversary; and on the point of episcopal discipline he was more than willing to allow what the Lutherans in general would regard as a culpable concession, but what it cost him no compunction to offer; and his opinion, as now expressed, is of so great interest, that I translate it:—

"I doubt not that our Apology" (Confession) "would appear to some far more gentle than the dishonesty of our adversaries requires. But I have included everything that is of chief importance in the cause. I would render to the Bishops entire jurisdiction, and the accustomed honour, although this may offend some who cannot bear to lose the liberty they have gotten. But O that we might get peace even under more severe conditions!.....I have met the Spanish secretary," (Valdez,) "who promises kindly, and has already spoken of my sentence with Cæsar and Campeggio. But everything is at God's disposal: pray Christ, therefore, to give us peace."

* *Commentaria Joan. Cochläi, De Actis et Scriptis M. Lutheri Mogunt. 1549. Sub anno MDXXX.*

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And again :—

“Certain persons are grievously offended that I would restore episcopal jurisdiction, or, in other words, ecclesiastical polity, which they call restoration of Papal dominion; but I am not ignorant why they have so great abhorrence of this advice. They cannot bear the idea of bringing back the cities to the domination of Bishops; and they have some reason. But with what face can we cast them off, if they will allow us to retain our doctrine? Indeed, every concession we make is encumbered with so many exceptions, that I fear the Bishops will think we are putting them off with mere empty words. O that I could confirm, not the domination, but the *administration*, of the Bishops! For I can see what sort of Church we are going to have, when ecclesiastical polity is utterly dissolved. I can foresee that the coming tyranny will be far more intolerable than that which has been cast off.”

He affirms, however, that he has not yielded anything for which Luther ever contended, not yet abated from his demands a single article of doctrine, but has contended so successfully for the truth as to extort some concessions even from Eck himself.

This refers to a debate holden August 22d, after several others had been held in vain, in the presence of Henry, Duke of Brunswick, and, after him, the Duke George, the Bishop of Augsburg, Eck, Cochläus, and Melancthon. Our theologian and Eck were chief disputants; and the latter was compelled to acknowledge that justification is rightly attributed to faith, but insisted that, instead of saying we are justified by *faith alone*, the author of the Confession should substitute the words, “*grace and faith*.” To this Melancthon would have consented, if Eck had not so interpreted the word “*grace*” as to render the proposition manifestly false.

As to doctrine, Melancthon stood firm as a rock. On remission of sins, on satisfaction and merit, and on the eucharist, which were the points discussed, he would yield nothing, but demanded the full enjoyment of that belief which constitutes the essence of religion, such as can live in the heart, and flourish in the life. “But although,” he says, “our adversaries have need of peace, they do not

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see how great would be their own peril in the event of war. For our own part, we proposed most moderate conditions. We would render obedience to Bishops, allow them jurisdiction, and promise to restore indifferent ceremonies.”

To George, Duke of Brandenburg, who consulted him on the question of allowing private masses again, as a condition of peace, he delivered a written paper, containing reasons for not consenting to the proposal, and entreated His Highness not to be induced, by any reasons or any arguments, to suffer private masses to be restored. But he implored him to have the people instructed in the word of God.

“You cannot think how bitterly I am hated by many for consenting to restore episcopal jurisdiction. Thus do our associates contend for their own kingdom, not for the Gospel. A certain friend of ours writes to ask me, for how great a sum of money the Pope of Rome might have hired me to give any better reason for the restoration of Papal authority than, in the judgment of most men, I have already given. But I have not yet deserted nor given up a single article pertaining to doctrine. They are only vexed at the thought of losing that political advantage of which it is not our desire to deprive the Bishops. Shortly, as I hope, the Emperor will decide.”*

Much has been written concerning the infirmity or the virtue of Philip Melancthon, as displayed at the Diet of Augsburg; and judgment is given according to the Presbyterian or Episcopalian bias of each writer. If I were a Presbyterian, which I certainly am not, I should probably pity the weakness of any man, however wise in other matters, who preferred episcopal discipline. At present I am able to think charitably, on this point, of the great man whose career I am endeavouring to trace; and am content with supposing that, if he was to be blamed, it was for being willing to allow civil jurisdiction (*politiciis rebus*) to certain Prince-Bishops, as well as ecclesiastical pre-eminence to Bishops in general. Sitting apart and cool on our elevation of British freedom, we may distinguish

* Pezelius, *Historica quædam de Actis in Conventu Augustano*.

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more clearly than he between a spiritual prelacy and certain temporal adjuncts; but I do not yet discover timidity or vacillation in this part of his conduct. He contended earnestly, at Augsburg, for *the faith* once delivered to the saints. And it must be further noted, that the concession of temporal jurisdiction to the Prince-Bishops, which he seems to speak of in private letters, he did not presume to offer when acting for his friends, who were unwilling to allow it.

A minute journalist of the Diet of Augsburg might trace its theologian from day to day, in correspondence, in conference, in controversial study, or in presence of the assembled potentates of Germany. Such a minute narrative would produce a very exact impression of the endurance of Melancthon, as well as of his higher virtues; but if readers gained anything further, it would be an ability to pity the theologian, and the Princes too, for their incessant, yet fruitless, labour to conciliate Monks and casuists, and to settle terms of accommodation with Prelates and Princes, whom nothing could ever satisfy but an utter extinction of the Reformation. We may therefore be content to note that, after all the months of alarm and anxiety preceding, Melancthon fought in the front of this battle during three months, from the opening of the sessions until September 22d, when Charles V. summoned the Elector of Saxony and his brethren to hear the decision.

This was delivered in the form of a decree, granting them time for further consideration; that is to say, until the 15th day of April in the year following. In that interval they were invited to reflect on hard conditions of peace, or, indeed, of life. They were asked to consent to all the articles of the Roman faith, and repudiate their own Confession, acknowledging that it had been triumphantly refuted. They were absolutely forbidden to commit any further innovations on the established religion during all that interval, or suffer anything to be printed contrary to the faith of "the Catholic and Roman Church." No man was permitted to make a convert; no Protestant Prince might hinder his subjects from reviving the ceremonies that had been abolished in his dominions.

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Priests and Monks were to have unlimited license for pursuing their vocation. The Elector and other Princes were to join with their antagonists in extirpating the Anabaptists, and even their Zuinglian brethren, by the sword. And, finally, the Emperor promised to use his influence with the Pope and other Sovereigns to have a General Council indicted within six months after the closing of the Diet, and assembled within one year.

To hear this decree, which was very long, the Princes and their attendants were assembled in the Bishop's palace. The Protestants, who expected nothing less, listened with remarkable equanimity, and answered for themselves through Pontanus, the Elector's secretary, that their Confession had not yet been confuted; that their doctrine was entirely that of holy Scripture, free from the least mixture of impiety; that this would have been demonstrated, if the writing produced in contradiction of it had been put into their hands; but that, so far as it was possible for them to comprehend the objections once read in their hearing, they had prepared some kind of answer, by which they hoped the Emperor would perceive that, notwithstanding the attempted confutation, their Confession remained untouched.

Pontanus closed his speech with presenting this writing, from the pen of Melancthon, to Frederic Palatine, who interpreted for the Emperor; and Frederic was in the act of reaching it to his master, when King Ferdinand, sitting beside him, whispered something into his ear. The Emperor shook his head, and the Palatine returned the paper to Pontanus. A few words from the latter closed the proceedings of that evening; and in a day or two the Elector and his friends turned their backs on Augsburg.

Melancthon put his Defence of the Confession into the hands of a printer, even before leaving the city; but Cochläus, to whom the Imperio-Papal party was indebted for the oft-mentioned Refutation, did not find time to give his production to the world. Cæsar had, indeed, instructed certain theologians to deliver it to some typographer to be printed; but Cochläus quaintly tells his own tale thus:—

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"Cochläus had already had some conversation on the subject with Alexander Wissenhorn, the printer, who had previously printed some of his works; but just at that time the most illustrious Prince, the Duke George of Saxony, his most clement lord and patron, departed; and with him he had to go, on account of the dangers of the way. Others, busy with other matters, omitted to publish this Confutation: *hence it came to pass that even to this day the Confutation has not been printed, although it was not unworthy to see the light.*" *

Worthy or unworthy, could only be matter of conjecture; for it lay several years unpublished. The Protestant Defence, on the contrary, is counted with the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church; and to characterize that I need no more than copy the words of its learned author: "I have written as moderately as I could; but if you find anything more harsh than it should be, let me remind you that I have to dispute with the theologians and Monks who wrote the Confutation, not with Cæsar and the Princes, whom I regard with the veneration that is due." †

This gentleness gained much good-will to the author of the Confession and to the Princes who signed it, but was lost upon the party dominant at Augsburg. A few remained behind to represent the Protestants, and made some ineffectual attempts to conciliate the Diet; but the last of them departed on the 14th of November, and three days afterwards Cæsar issued a very severe decree, commanding "the Catholic religion" alone to be exercised in the Empire, and all matters of worship, ceremony, and discipline to be restored to their former state. All men, of whatever class or condition, were forbidden to innovate in doctrine, rite, or ceremony, under penalty of death and confiscation of goods. Melancthon heard this decree with disappointment and alarm.

* Cochläus, ut supra.

† Melancthon, in Præfat. ad Apologiam. Some years afterwards, as Melancthon tells us in this preface, he caught a sight of the Apology. That must have been in manuscript.

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Charles V. could not enforce the edict, which rather expressed the bitterness of Italian and Spanish Priests than any inclination of his own to repeat the massacres of Aquitaine in the cities of Germany. Instead, therefore, of weeping over martyrdoms, Melancthon had to pay the penalty of a high reputation for wisdom, and act as counsellor in affairs of State as well as Church. One question laid before him was, whether the Emperor ought to indulge his inclination by conferring the title of Cæsar on his brother Ferdinand, King of the Romans. To that question, however, he scarcely ventured to return an answer, prudently leaving the discussion of such matters to those who cared to understand them, or dared involve themselves in the perils of debate.

It would have been well if he had also refused to meddle in the controversy between Henry VIII. of England and the Pope, on the marriage-question. Henry had lately put away his Queen Catharine, under pretence of a sudden trouble of conscience because she had been previously married to his deceased brother Arthur; and now that he wished to exchange her for Anne Boleyn, he professed serious doubts as to the validity of the dispensation granted him for his marriage by Julius II. That the dispensation was worthless, there can be no doubt, if the marriage was unlawful, and we know that it was condemned by a multitude of wise men, by some for love of truth, and by some for love of money; but our present business is to tell what Philip Melancthon said when the English Commissioners came to solicit his opinion on the case.

They contended, he said, for *τὸ ἀντιστάσιμον*, a minute regard to justice, which was very easy; whereas he took what he felt and confessed to be the less tenable position of so bending the law as not to make the divorce of Catharine or the illegitimatizing of the Princess Mary necessary. Neither did he wish to thwart the inclination or hurt the tender conscience of the King!

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“What then? What if public utility, for the sake of hereditary succession, should call for a new marriage? To this I answer, that if the King wishes to provide for such succession, it is much better that he should so do without inflicting dishonour on his first wife. And this he may do, without any damage to conscience or to fame, by having recourse to polygamy.” Not satisfied with citing Abraham and David as models for Christian men to imitate in this particular, he searched the history and laws of the declining Roman Empire, and pointed at Valentinian, who had two consorts living at once, and at Theodosius, who married a lady born of one of them. For certain public reasons Melancthon would advise the King of England to ask the Pope for a dispensation to take Anne together with Catharine, and he would tell the Pope—not as Pontiff, but as public Magistrate—that some of his predecessors had granted similar indulgences. If not, if the Pope reigning would not sell his benediction upon bigamy, Melancthon would again offer his advice to good King Henry in a few plain words:—“If the Pope will not dispense, the King of England may marry notwithstanding; for the Pope cannot object to the King dispensing for himself in a case of so great necessity, where charity demands a dispensation, either because conscience or the kingdom is in danger. Necessity sets the King free, if he needs another wife for conscience’ sake; according to the rule, ‘It is better to obey God than men.’” *

I should be glad to share with Bishop Burnet in the satisfaction of incredulity. The Bishop “cannot believe” that Philip Melancthon advised polygamy; but no literal evidence can be more clear than that which I have now quoted. His weakness was deplorable, and admits of no defence, perhaps not of any palliation; and I can only think of one use to be made of so flagrant a lapse in the conduct of such a man, by reminding the casuist how easily one false step in theory may precipitate him into the lowest depth of practical immorality.

The subsequent epistolary correspondence between the

* Pezelius, p. 128.

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King and the divine was curious and edifying. We must review it a little more particularly.

In the spring of the year 1535, a refugee from England, Dr. Barnes, whose preaching had offended Cardinal Wolsey, came to Wittenberg. He was not sent by Henry VIII., but had counterfeited madness to save his life, and fled to Germany. He did not speak of religion, at first, nor does it appear that he knew much of it; but only talked of the King's divorce of his late Queen Catharine.* He did, however, so speak of the King, if he did not represent himself as his messenger, as to induce Melancthon, already known favourably to His Majesty, to write him a letter of intercession for the persecuted Lollards. He had heard of martyrdoms in Smithfield and elsewhere, and earnestly exhorted the King to desist from putting dissentients to death, and to encourage a reformation of religion. Henry was pleased, and after some consideration determined to follow up the German correspondence.

From Windsor (July 8th) he sent a letter to be delivered to the Elector of Saxony by Dr. Barnes, whom he accredited as a Chaplain of his, and Professor of Theology, worthy of full and undoubted confidence. Barnes, little thinking that, before a fifth summer had elapsed, he would himself be burnt at a stake in Smithfield for the sake of the religion which the King now commissioned him to promote, applied to Luther for a letter of introduction to the Elector, obtained, also, the signatures of Jonas, Cruciger, and Melancthon, and had an audience at Jena; but did not yet receive an answer, as John Frederic could not answer by himself alone, but was bound to consult his allies before entering into correspondence with a foreign Prince.

Not so Melancthon, who could answer for himself alone, which he did freely. Barnes then urged him, in the King's name, to come over to England; and he would most readily have done so, if the Elector would permit. Luther earnestly

* Collier's "Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain," part ii., book iii. Fox, or Fuller, or Burnet, will correct the mistake of Seckendorf, who says that Dr. Barnes was *sent*—"ex Britannia ab Henrico Rege missus."

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desired him to go; and if any one feared for his safety in the dominions of a Sovereign who burnt heretics, a royal offer of safe-conduct, and even of hostages, might dispel their apprehensions. But the Elector had just refused Melancthon permission to go to Paris, on the invitation of the French King; and, grieved at that refusal, he had no courage left to ask for leave to visit England.

However, he wrote a respectful letter * to the King, and, with the letter, put a copy of his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, with a dedication to Henry VIII. prefixed, into the hands of one Alexander Aless, a learned Scotchman, probably bearer of the King's letter to Barnes; and the parcel was very soon delivered to His Majesty. By quick return a present of two hundred crowns came back to the commentator, with a Latin epistle from the King of England (October 1st).

Henry, by the grace of God, King, &c., and supreme head, under Christ, of the Church of England upon earth, to Philip Melancthon, excellent Professor of Theology, and his much-beloved friend, professed sincere admiration of his zeal for truth and piety. The letter brought by Alexander Aless had much increased that feeling. The desire of serving His Majesty, expressed therein, was answered by an offer of royal favour and assistance whenever opportunity might occur. "And you will understand more by a letter from Thomas Cromwell, in which we pray you to place entire confidence."

Meanwhile a courteous but careful reply from the Elector acknowledged the zeal of Henry VIII. for the propagation of true religion, but made no engagement that would have interfered with the kind of allegiance due to the Emperor of Germany. Encouraged yet more by these communications, the King of England sent, as an embassy to the chief of the Protestant Princes, Edward Fox, Bishop of Hereford, Archdeacon Nicholas Heath, and Dr. Barnes, bearing proposals for a concord in religion, with a defensive alliance against the Pope. These proposals they first presented to the Elector at Weimar, and then to the assembled Princes in

* The original letter is preserved in the British Museum.

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Smalcald ; but, as they were not eventually adopted, it is unnecessary to describe the document, or to recount the Articles of advice which Melancthon was directed to prepare in reply, and which were sent over to England. Our impetuous King could not attain to the standard of Christian truth established in Saxony ; and the Protestants of Smalcald were unable to approve of his proceedings, or to agree with his principles, which were anti-Popish, indeed, but could not be regarded as Christian.

The Envoys, too, failed to make any very favourable impression in the Saxon Court. "One of them," said Melancthon, "Nicholas Heath, is the first of our guests in cultivation and learning. The others have no taste for our philosophy and politeness ; and I therefore avoid their conversation as much as possible."

Among other questions, that of the divorce came under discussion ; but the theologians could not give it the retrospective sanction that the King desired ; and a letter of thanks from Greenwich for the civility shown to the Ecclesiastics who discharged the functions of a religious embassy, for that time closed the correspondence of Henry VIII. with the Elector, Melancthon, and the German confederates.*

Communications were afterwards resumed, but nothing occurred worth notice in relation to our present subject, until, in a letter from Henry VIII. to the Elector, the King says, "We hope that, for more happily finishing and concluding what is happily begun, your Excellency will send us Master Philip Melancthon, in whose excellent learning and sound judgment great hope is placed by all good men ; and that some other good and upright men will also come over to us as soon as possible."†

But good and upright men had never less encouragement to visit England ; and of all men in England the King should have been the last to invite them. For at this very time he was burning Lambert for denying transubstantiation, and dictating the sanguinary Six Articles to Convocation and Parliament.

* Seckendorf, lib. iii., sect. 13.

† Seckendorf, lib. iii., sect. 17, A.D. 1538.

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Like Francis in France, he endeavoured to gloss over his barbarities with an insincere profession of desire for conciliation; and, like that Monarch, invited Melancthon to adorn his court, and seem, at least, to sanction those barbarities by his friendly presence.

The original of a highly-important letter of Melancthon to the King, is now before me.* It was written with equal eloquence and freedom; and the fac-simile prefixed to the present study shows by its erasures, that the letter was probably written at once, without a rough copy, and therefore free from the stiffness that often creeps over leisurably-finished compositions.

The writer knew that the Bishop of Rome was endeavouring, by every sort of artifice, to incense the hatred of Cæsar Charles and the French King against the Britons and the Germans; but, hoping that God would overrule all perils, and be the King's defender, he had already written His Majesty concerning the reformation of the Churches, a reformation which he again prays him to undertake. This letter he has added, "not in impudence," but guided by the best desire for the welfare of the Church and of His Royal Majesty, whom he implores to take this freedom in good part. To prepare the royal mind for what is to follow, Melancthon descants on the merits of the Church of England in past ages, and rejoices that, in a recent edict, there was promise of a public deliberation for the improvement of the ritual and laws of the Churches, a promise which mitigated the severity of that edict. "For although I applaud the piety that prohibits errors which are opposed to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, which doctrine we also profess, yet I grieve that there is an Article added wherein the observance of celibacy and the ancient ceremonies are enjoined. The authority of this edict † confirms the pertinacity of those who hate the doctrine of the Reformers, and counteract their labours."

He acknowledges that the King may imagine himself

* MSS. Cotton. Cleopat. E. V.

† Probably the Articles of Faith which passed the Convocation of 1536, and were published by the King. But priestly celibacy is not referred to in the copies I have examined.

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to be maintaining peace, and guarding against disorders by this enforced uniformity; and for his part he only asks indulgence for those who never disturb the public peace while they set aside human traditions. He does not ask indulgence for turbulent and seditious persons; but he gently intimates that, after all, peace is not the only object of consideration, since a tender conscience, too, ought to be respected, not assailed and weakened by the decisions of men in power.

He strongly censures those who artfully cherish nefarious abuses, and fabulous absurdities, as do the Cardinals Contareno, Sadolet, and Pole, at present the chief defenders of Roman impiety. Following the example of St. Paul, who so earnestly objected to the continuance of Levitical ceremonies, he, too, would say that, "if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." And he expostulates forcibly with the King for forbidding marriage, in spite of the teaching of holy Scripture, and the remonstrances of some of the wisest and most eminent Ecclesiastics against celibacy. He inveighs with equal earnestness against idolatries which the King still sanctions, and the persecution he still suffers to be inflicted on the most pious of his subjects. In short, he entreats him to abolish his own laws, which in reality sustain the power of the Pope in England, and, if continued, will, sooner or later, introduce his direct tyranny again.

This letter is no less remarkable for a clear foresight than for humanity and piety.

THE LEAGUE OF SMALCALD.

The Protestants were allowed six months for deliberation by the decree of Augsburg. Without delay, therefore, the Princes assembled in the town of Smalcald (Schmalkalden, on the river Schmalkalde) in the county of Henneberg, under the Landgrave of Hesse, a Prince whom we have already noticed as honourably conspicuous for his desire to conciliate the Lutherans and the Reformed. Convened by the Elector of Saxony, the following met there on the 22d of December, 1530:—John Elector of Saxony, Ernest Duke of Brunswick,

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Philip Landgrave of Hesse, Wolfgang Prince of Anhalt, Gebhard and Albert, Counts of Mansfeld, with the Delegates of fifteen free cities. They were not an armed confederacy, but came together to agree on terms to be offered to the Emperor as the basis of pacification.

The terms were substantially as follows :—

The Emperor should be required to restrain his Fiscal from instituting prosecutions on account of religion, which that officer was doing most vexatiously.

If such exactions were continued on any Protestant by any one under pretext of religion, the other Protestants would render advice and help.

Learned theologians and jurisconsults were appointed to prepare a uniform order of ecclesiastical rites and a scheme of discipline.

A declaration against the prosecutions of the Fiscal, and an appeal from the decree of Augsburg, were to be drawn up, with a defence of the religion and acts of the confederates, the whole published in Latin, German, and French, and sent to the Kings of France and England, and the other Princes of Europe.

Application for obtaining a Council should be made to Cæsar, and learned men employed to study, historically, all that related to the indiction and management of Councils, and to consider what should be done if the Pope insisted on being head of the Council proposed.

All Protestant Theologians and Doctors were to be encouraged to defend their profession of faith out of holy Scripture in a free Council.

The formula of agreement was signed on the last day of the year; and on the 16th of February following letters written by Melancthon were sent to the Kings of England and France. They contain a recital of the chief events of the Reformation of religion in Germany; a statement of the doctrine and worship of the Protestants; and one request only, that their Majesties would use their influence to obtain the convocation of a free and general Council. And while this elegant pen elaborated sentences for Kings, Luther, with more

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trenchant rapidity, put forth a "Warning to his dear Germans." *

In a second conference at Smalcald, the Princes advanced further in their league; and on the last day of February, 1531, recorded their persuasion, that those who caused the pure word of God to be preached in their dominions had now reason to fear a hostile power; that it was their duty to guard themselves and their subjects against being deprived of that word by force; and that they were therefore justified by all laws, Divine and human, in entering into an alliance, not for aggression, but for mutual defence. This alliance was to consist in constant and faithful friendship and union against common enemies, if any of them were troubled for the word of God and the doctrine of the Gospel. They took no step, at that time, towards raising an army; but deferred further action for consideration at another conference, as occasion might arise. And they appended a declaration that their league was not directed against the Emperor or the Empire, but intended only for the preservation of public peace and Christian truth against unjust violence.

Courteous answers from the Kings of England and France, neither of whom was then on terms of cordiality with Charles V., encouraged the confederated Princes to hope for the influence of them both, and led to further correspondence.

Threatened with a Turkish invasion of Austria, hearing that Solyman was again in Hungary at the head of a greater army than before, finding that the Protestant Princes would not consent to march against the Turks until their states were assured against oppression by himself, and deserted by the Dukes of Bavaria, who, although sufficiently zealous for the old superstition, would not weaken the Protestant party so long as their opposition served to embarrass the Emperor,—Charles was compelled to enter into terms of accommodation.

"The Transaction of Nuremberg," as it is called, was a truce then made between the contending parties, until

* Warnunge D. Martini Luther an seine lieben Deutschen. Wittenberg, 1531.

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the assembling of a free, general, and Christian Council, to settle all controversy, or, in default of such a Council, a Diet of the whole Empire. This deed of pacification was confirmed by an "Edict of Peace with the Protestants," sealed at Ratisbon (August 2d, 1532). By this edict, if there were no other evidence, it would appear, clearly as language can express, that Charles V. had condescended to act as a vassal of the Papacy, by directing the Fiscal of the Empire to institute judicial processes against the Elector of Saxony and his adherents on account of religion. Those prosecutions were now suspended, further proceedings of the same kind against other persons were withdrawn, peace and charity were enjoined on all, and all were expected to unite in raising a grand armament to give battle to the Turk.*

The suspension of controversy and persecution left Melancthon more at ease to fulfil his professorial duties; but sorrows and anxieties did not cease. Between the transactions of Nuremberg and Ratisbon, he and Luther were summoned to the death-bed of the Elector, whom they found speechless with paralysis, and quickly saw him breathe his last. The knowledge that John Frederic, his son and successor, would support the cause of the Reformation with even greater vigour, alleviated their sorrow for his decease; and, in a funeral oration of characteristic simplicity, Melancthon paid a due tribute to the piety of a Prince whose conduct had uniformly adorned the cause that he espoused. Occasion for anxiety appeared in a second interview that took place between the Emperor and the Pope at Bologna, where Charles met him on his way homeward from the East; but this Monarch was then too intent on re-visiting his home at Madrid, and too solicitous to gain the confidence of all the German Princes, to take the field in the interests of the priesthood; and, by dint of perseverance, he wrung from Clement VII. a reluctant concession to convene a Council.† The Pope issued briefs to that effect, but without fixing time or place; and silently reserved an intention

* *Le Plat. Monumenta ad Hist. Conc. Tridentini illustrandam*, Lovanii, 1782, tom. ii., pp. 503, 507.

† Guicciardini, lib. xx.

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to make the conditions of assemblage such that the Protestants could not accept them.*

To propose such conditions, Ugo Rangoni, Bishop of Reggio, came into Saxony as Legate, Lambert Briard, as Imperial Ambassador, met him, and they presented them in writing to the Elector John Frederic, at Weimar. He received the messengers with great courtesy, perused the Articles, which bore the signature of the Nuncio Apostolic, and requested time for deliberation. They were to this effect:—

1. First of all, the Universal Council, which it is proposed to convene and celebrate, is to be free, and conducted in the manner accustomed of all Universal Councils from the beginning.

2. They who attend there must promise to abide by all its decrees.

3. They who are by reasonable hindrance prevented from attending, may send representatives with good credentials.

4. Meanwhile there shall be no innovations in matters of religion in Germany.

5. All parties must now consent as to the place where the Council shall be holden, or all preparations will be null. "Our most holy Father" proposes Mantua, Bologna, or Piacenza.

6. If any Princes, potentates, and members of Christendom,—which is not to be believed,—choose to be absent without reasonable cause, and contumaciously refuse the Council, the Pope will, nevertheless, proceed to hold it, together with the sounder part.

7. If any attempt to prevent this holy work, or to resist the decrees, or, on account of this Council, to separate themselves from the Pope, and presume to do aught against him, those who are of better mind shall stand by the Holy See, and favour and help His Holiness with all their might.

8. Six months after these Articles have been received by the King of the Romans, the Princes of Germany, and other Christian Kings, the Pope will convene the

* Le Plat, tom. ii., pp. 510—516.

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Council, and assemble it within one year, in the city chosen for that purpose.*

The Elector convened his colleagues to meet at Smalcald, and, meanwhile, laid the Articles before his theologians, Luther, Justus Jonas, Pomeranus, and Melancthon. These were unanimous in rejecting them; but the last, in his simplicity, could not perceive "that the Pope was acting with utter dissimulation, and proposing conditions that could not possibly be borne, in order to deter all who had signed the Confession of Augsburg from presenting themselves at such a Council." For his part, he would leave the Pope to summon the Council, and preside over it also; but when it was demanded that all, without exception, should promise to abide by its decrees, to that he gave his unqualified refusal. He maintained that accusation, defence, and opinion should be free in a Christian Council. He thought it absurd to bargain for the conclusion before the deliberations were begun, and contrary to the very semblance of justice to oblige parties to approve, beforehand, of they knew not what.

Others were of opinion, that the Pope should not be permitted to summon the Council, nor to preside in it; for to allow him the right of judging would be to leave untouched those prerogatives which it behoved all Christendom to reduce.

The demands of the Pope and the judgment of the theologians were laid before the states and cities at Smalcald. After ample deliberation, they told the Legate and his colleague, that they could not possibly accept a Council on conditions that would subvert all freedom; that the place of assemblage for a Council to pacify Germany ought to be in Germany itself; that the Pope, who would there be either accuser or accused, ought by no means to be judge; that they would only receive the decisions of a Council so far as they might be in agreement with the word of God.

So bold a decision would not have been given by Melancthon, who continually betrayed an excessive deference for the authorities of the Church he had abandoned; an error, however, in which he is not alone, but is

* *Le Plat, ut supra.*

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associated with all who allow the Church of Rome to be essentially Christian, who receive proselyted Priests in the character of Christian Ministers, and who contend that an apostate hierarchy can confer orders valid for the discharge of ministerial functions according to the obligations enumerated in the writings of the Apostles. If, then, I am to confess that Melancthon was weak, in making so great concessions to the Roman Pontiff and his priesthood, I will most readily do so, hoping that if any of my readers pronounce absolutely on the weakness of Melancthon, they will confess their own.

In full accordance with Melancthon's concession to the claims of Clement VII., as they are described by his friend Camerarius, is a judgment of his concerning Councils, written about this time, wherein he endeavours to answer the objections to those assemblies which soon became prevalent in Germany, where people began to speak of them as inexpedient and unnecessary. No doubt such Councils as the Popes desired—and such a one was afterwards assembled in Trent—were quite as bad as those Germans thought whom our admirable and lovely theologian sets down as Epicureans.* But for him thus to resist the public mind, and to stand almost alone at Smalcald, after he had been the master-spirit of Augsburg, required a quality of mind which, while we lament the error of judgment, we may confess worthy of some respect.

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The history of this league now exhibits Melancthon most conspicuously as in correspondence with France. Courteous replies, as I have stated, were sent by the two Kings to the confederates of Smalcald: but the longer-continued and more important negotiations were with Francis; and the following letter so distinctly opens these negotiations, that we must peruse it all. It is addressed to William du Bellai, Lord of Langey, the nobleman whom Francis had sent into Germany to treat with the Protestants, hoping to gain their political alliance

* Pezelius, A.D. 1533. De Synodis Consultatio.

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against the Emperor, and to effect some compromise that might conciliate the Pope. Melancthon writes thus :—

“ Most illustrious Lord, in compliance with your request, I have collected the principal Articles on which there is any controversy, and have shown such moderation in treating them as I think will be useful to the Church. I have no doubt that there might easily be an agreement on all these Articles, if some of the Monarchs would undertake to bring about a friendly and free conference of a few good and learned men. For, after all, the points of controversy are not so many. But the uninstructed do not perceive on what the questions turn, and sometimes they make a great noise about matters that are quite irrelevant. For amidst public discord many unlearned men spring up on both sides; and the Articles which I send herewith I have most gladly put together, that you may the more clearly see to what subjects attention should be confined. Our object is not to abolish ecclesiastical polity and the power of the Popes. Our object is not to change ancient ordinances without distinction. The leading men among us are extremely desirous to preserve the accustomed form of church-order, so far as this is possible. Many matters of controversy, too, have fallen out of date, and time softens the harshness of dispute. I pray your Highness, therefore, for the glory of Christ, to exhort the chief Monarchs to enter on a pious agreement before it be too late for moderate counsels. What times are at hand, if there be none to apply a remedy to present dissensions, and what loss the commonwealth and the Church will both sustain, if war follow, your Highness can judge better than I. But it is a good office, worthy of a great man like you, to interpose for the saving of both the commonwealth and the Church; but I have no need to exhort you who are already willing. This, however, I promise you, that with the utmost sincerity I will adapt my counsels to your own wishes, and to those of other good men, and will so act that you may understand me to be longing most earnestly for public tranquillity. I respectfully commend to your Highness my old friend and fellow-

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countryman, Mr. Ulric Chelius, and pray you, even for my sake, to show him kindness. *Bene ac feliciter vale.* August 1st, 1534. I am

"Your Highness's most devoted

"PHILIP MELANCTHON."

He wrote, be it observed, in his own name, and proposed a middle way, which fewer were disposed to take than he seemed to imagine. Nothing but a ruling desire for conciliation, warping his judgment, and causing him to suppose other chief men as ready to make concessions to the claims of the old priesthood as himself, could suffice to justify professions that would have been dishonest if made by any other leading theologian, or any confederated Prince. But the proposal was welcomed at the court of Francis I.

The Articles which accompanied this letter were presented to the King, and we shall hear of them again; but these, too, bear internal evidence of an effort to adapt his language to the persons addressed that carried him beyond the limits of prudence, if not of honesty. Two sets of Articles are published. One, those which were actually sent into France;* and the other, those which were published in Germany.† A severe critic might point out implied, if not open, contradictions; and our admiration of the writer must not prevent us from acknowledging that he wrote the German Articles in a style that he would not use for France, and the French in a style that he could not use for Germany. With such management in framing documents that required the strictest uniformity, it was not possible to avoid the appearance of dishonesty.

I cannot repress a conviction that Melancthon's willingness to concede the supremacy of the Pope, the essential powers of the prelacy, and even some points hitherto controverted by the Lutherans themselves, provoked the Reformed in Paris to make their demonstration of inflexible attachment to the doctrine of the eucharist, already attested by many martyrs,—a demonstration which

* Le Plat, tom. ii., p. 777.

† Melancthonis Opera, tom. iv., p. 825. Pezelius, p. 224.

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is generally censured as imprudent. Perhaps it was imprudent; but it was honest. The facts are these:—

Some persons indiscreetly zealous, as Theodore Beza says,—but he does not tell us what provoked them to such indiscretion,—wrote a paper against the mass. It is not unlikely that they had heard what the great theologian of Protestant Germany said on that subject, to the great delight of the Bishop of Paris, and many others, but chiefly of the King, who intended to invite him to his court. For after blaming the Priests for bringing the mass into contempt by their ignorance, Melancthon had said: “Perhaps, if these hireling dealers in masses are removed, its honour will be restored to the mass, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, so that the psalms, hymns, and songs may be spiritual. Let us sing and give praise in the Lord. For we never wished to condemn the mass itself, but only the abuses and evils which have crept into private masses, and the preposterous confidence in the work itself,” &c. Even the great controversy raised by Luther concerning the doctrine of remission of sins by masses, he would contrive to settle (*concordiam sarcire*) by help of Thomas Aquinas.*

The paper, as if written in direct contradiction to this Article, which was the more offensive as coming from a Lutheran, with whom the French Reformed were in irreconcilable disagreement on the sacramental question, was printed at Neufchâtel, and many copies were scattered, at night, in the streets of Paris. Others were posted on the walls, and others in the palace, and even on the door of the King’s bedchamber. The Priests raved, when daylight disclosed the placards. The half-Lutheran courtiers were scarcely less furious, and the King was bitterly indignant. The Lieutenant-Criminal, Jean Morin, an inveterate opposer of the new religion, whom we find described as dissolute, notorious for hardihood in making arrests, and cunning in extorting confessions, was employed to search out the offenders. A wretch who had once professed the Reformed religion, sold himself to Morin, and

* Art. v., De Missâ.

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betrayed several secret congregations, leading the officers from house to house.

Many were imprisoned, tried, and condemned to die. One day in January, all being ready for execution, the King walked as a penitent in grand procession to the church of St. Genevieve, passing through many streets, and stopped at six stations, to see at each a Sacramentarian swung over a bonfire, so as to be roasted to death slowly. After thus placating the displeasure of God, as he said, for the insult offered to the mass, His Majesty returned to dinner with a large company of Bishops, noblemen, and foreign Ambassadors, and after having eaten and drunk well, he made an oration, exhorting them all to destroy every adherent of the pestiferous sect that they could find.*

Those Frenchmen were martyred for declaring against the worship of the host, the very worship which Melancthon had said he would gladly have to be restored where it had been abolished. Their faith rebuked his expediency. Of the part he took in the Sacramentarian controversy I may speak again presently; but Hospinian, its historian, shall now furnish us with evidence that the solemn testimony of the Parisian martyrs was not lost upon him.

The intelligence of that human holocaust reached him just after he had been holding a conference with Bucer on the very subject, at the request of the Landgrave of Hesse; and under date of January 22d, 1535, he wrote in Greek to Brentius: "I would not be author or defender of a new doctrine in the Church; but I observe the testimonies of many of the ancient writers who explain without any ambiguity this mystery to be typical and figurative. The contrary testimonies are either later, or they are spurious. You have, therefore, to consider whether you will defend the ancient opinion. Earnestly do I wish that a pious Council would pronounce judgment without sophistry or tyranny. Many are put to death in France

* Sleidani Commentaria de Statu Religionis, &c. Sub ann. 1534 et 1535. Sleidan was in France at the time, and in intimate communication with the three brothers Bellay, the Chamberlain, the Bishop, and the Cardinal, who were also in correspondence with Melancthon.

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and elsewhere on account of this opinion; and many unreasonably applaud those executions, and confirm the fury of the tyrants. *That affair, to tell the truth, distresses me exceedingly.*" * Never before had he made such a concession; and if he had not known that his own proposal to restore the mass was the provocation that called out those brethren to martyrdom, it is not likely, as I venture to believe, that the arguments of Bucer would have wrought much more powerfully with him than those of Zuinglius and Ecclampadius at Marburg. He might also now begin to learn that temporizing, even though garnished with good motives, does more harm than good.

The report of those atrocities raised such a cry of indignation and horror in Germany,—together with the honourable reception of an Ambassador at Paris from the Sultan Solymán,—that Francis I. found it necessary to write an apologetic letter to the orders of the Empire. One passage of that letter tends further to establish the connexion between Melancthon's Articles and the Parisian placards. "Last autumn," he says, "immediately after the return of my Ambassador from you, when he had brought certain writings from some of your Preachers calculated to assuage controversy, and there was no reason why, with such a beginning, I should not be full of hope, the father of lies," &c., "stirred up certain madmen," &c.† Then he endeavours to justify his conduct, and gives permission to the Germans to burn any French Sacramentarians who may chance to offend in like manner within their dominions.

If he knew that his concessions provoked the protest at Paris, and the catastrophe consequent, his grief must have been quite as poignant as he described it, and with so much greater haste would he endeavour to quell the fury of persecution. This he did by writing to men in power, and particularly to John Bellay, Bishop of Paris, and John Sturm, an eminent lecturer in classics and logic.

To the Bishop, writing without date, as he frequently did, he apologized for thus opening correspondence; but

* *Hist. Sacramentaria Pars altera. An. 1535.*

† *Le Plat, tom. ii., p. 767.*

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declared himself unable to keep silence in such time of peril to France and to the universal Church. France might be regarded as the most flourishing nation of Europe, and—if it were lawful so to speak—head of the Christian world, whose example had the greatest force.

“If, then, it should be once determined by yourselves, not only to coerce fanatical and seditious spirits, but utterly to resist every amendment of ecclesiastical doctrine, and to defend the present vices of the Church with all your might, good men of all nations will be sorely disappointed, considering, as they do, how great is the authority of France. For the other nations follow its example..... Wherefore, for the glory of Christ, I pray you that, whatever you do, you will endeavour to soften the temper of Princes, and exhort them rather to consider how the Church may be healed, and not lacerated more and more. I think with you, that fanatic spirits, and pernicious opinions, and seditious men have to be put down; but I also think that there are some abuses which must be openly reproved. Many pious and learned men desire a purer doctrine, not from any private motive, but through earnest love of true piety. And the French nation, especially, shares in this desire.” After much exhortation to advise compassion, and counteract the mischief done by ignorant and cruel men, he closes with a sentence that might have the force of truth or not, as it was variously interpreted:—“For my own part, I have always laboured to soften down controversies: I do the same still, and my opinion is always with the judgment of the Church; that is to say, with the judgment of learned and good men like yourself.”*

To Sturm he had written sooner after the martyrdoms, advising him to flee for his life, as one suspected of heresy; but Sturm, it would seem, disavowed all connexion with imprudent and seditious persons, and felt no

* We may note that Bellay laboured hard to prevent the separation of England from Rome during the quarrel of Henry VIII. with the Pope, and would probably have succeeded if the Cardinals had been as prudent as himself. Shortly after the receipt of this letter from Melancthon, he was himself made Cardinal, in consideration of his great exertions to save England to the Roman See.

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apprehension of danger to himself. Melancthon, too, still appeared to the French Court as one whose disapprobation of the martyrs' boldness was undoubted, and who could be made good use of; and therefore the King and the liberal party again expressed their desire for his presence. On this point, however, Melancthon had misgivings, and begged his friend to advise him as to the course he should pursue, reiterating more studiously than, at this day, we like to read, soft censures of what he calls fanatical, absurd, and pernicious conduct.*

Such overtures from the man whom all Europe justly regarded as only second to Luther in influence with the Lutheran Princes, were pondered by King Francis and his courtiers; and after the deliberation of about two months, which were probably spent in private and indirect communication, the Bishop of Paris, now made Cardinal, wrote him a letter which almost betrays traces of dictation from Rome itself. The newly-made Cardinal says that he is on the point of going to the "threshold of the Apostles," where he offers, very significantly, to serve Melancthon to the utmost of his power.

"There is nothing," he writes, "that I so earnestly long for as the termination, by some right means, of those dissensions by which the Church of Christ has now for some time past been suffering so great injury. For God's sake, my Melancthon, devote all your powers to this pacification. You have all good men on your side, including one here who is in the highest authority, even King Francis, who bears justly, as I believe, the name and title of 'Most Christian.' If you could but once take mature counsel with him, which I foresee you soon will do, there is nothing that I would not hope for from your presence." And after many more warm words, he signs himself, "Thine, *ex animo*, CARDINAL BELLAY."†

This flattering letter was delivered to Melancthon by a special messenger, one Voré, Lord of Fosse, who had formerly spent two years at Wittenberg,‡ in the train of

* The letters to Bellay and Sturm are given by Pezalius, pp. 219—223.

† Seckendorf, lib. iii., sect. 13.

‡ Melancth. Opera, tom. iv., p. 823.

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the French Ambassador; a man who now passed for a friend of the Protestants, but soon afterwards was found to be one of their bitterest enemies. The same person was also bearer of a letter from the King himself, dated two days later (June 28th, 1535). It ran thus:—

“ Francis, by the grace of God King of the French, to our beloved Philip Melancthon, Health.

“ Your singular endeavours to appease those altercations which have arisen concerning ecclesiastical doctrine I have heard of, partly from William Bellay de Langey, our Chamberlain and Councillor, whom I have especially employed as my agent and interpreter in those matters; and now from your own letter to him,* and by the verbal report of Barnabé Voré de Fosse, who has just returned from you, I also hear that you are about to undertake this labour with an exceedingly willing mind, so much so that, as soon as possible, you will come to us, and here deliberate openly in my presence with a few select Doctors of ours, on methods by which that most lovely harmony of ecclesiastical polity may be restored, than which I know nothing that needs to be undertaken with greater care, attention, and solicitude of mind. I could not refrain from sending Voré de Fosse himself with this letter as a pledge of public faith; and I must entreat you not to suffer yourself to be diverted from this pious and holy enterprise by any dissuasion. Your coming will be most welcome to myself, whether it be in your own name alone, or in that of your countrymen. And you will find me to be, as ever, most careful of your dignity, both as a private person and, publicly, as a German. Farewell. June 28th, 1535.”

Melancthon did not conceal his delight and impatience to stand before the King, and in the royal presence to confer amicably and piously, as he thought, with Doctors of the Sorbonne concerning an adjustment of ecclesiastical doc-

* Camerarius, from whose account of the French correspondence I am compelled, by the internal evidence of the documents, to depart in other particulars, states that Voré had previously brought letters from private persons in France to Melancthon, and talked with him of a visit to that country. Some friends of Melancthon encouraged the idea. (Vita, sect. xlvii.)

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trine: but he could not quit Saxony without permission of his own Sovereign, an indulgence not likely to be granted; and what the Elector thought of this unauthorized negotiation with a foreign Monarch, when it came to his knowledge, we shall see presently. Melancthon, reasonably apprehending that his departure on such a mission would not be suffered, communicated his fears to William Bellay, and quickly received in reply another of the most adulatory and seductive letters that could be written.*

From this letter we gather that the correspondence with Melancthon had been only made known to a few persons, who kept the secret; that when the King heard of his anxiety to accept the invitation, not reflecting on the honour due to the Elector of Saxony, to whom, not to a private person, he should first have applied, he divulged the scheme by sending his Confessor, M. de Genlis, to the Faculty of Theology, with direction to elect some Doctors to dispute with the German on his arrival. But the Faculty, startled at such a demand, asked time to consider, met in private, and, after several sittings, appointed two of their number to carry a written refusal to the King. They said that if each of the Germans—yet there was but one expected—who wished to “be heard on certain Articles concerning faith and good manners” would send his doubts in writing, under his own seal, they would give him the instruction desired, and thus prove their entire willingness to obey His Majesty’s commands. The two Doctors, Batue and Bochini, put into the King’s hand a Latin codicil, crowded with authorities, to show that it is not lawful to dispute with heretics, and at the same time carried a paper of instructions to fortify them in refusing all oral controversy with heretics. If the Lutherans had any difficulty in their dogmas, this paper said, they might instruct themselves by help of excellent books of Catholic Doctors, both ancient and modern, without troubling the Faculty to interpose their judgment, although they would give judgment in writing, in case of necessity.

After a silence of six uncomfortable days, Francis sub-

* Seckendorf, *ut supra*.

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mitted to the mortification of answering their letter as they desired. In a very few words, he told his "dear and well beloved" that he had read and heard their judgment with singular satisfaction; and that, instead of Melancthon and other Germans, he sent twelve Articles on which the said Germans desired instruction from the Faculty. Those were the Articles we have already mentioned, on which no living German, not even Melancthon, ever thought of consulting the Sorbonne.

Two days after this transaction in Paris, and therefore before it could yet be known in Wittenberg, Melancthon, supposing that the Frenchmen still expected him, but being absolutely forbidden to go, wrote a letter to William Bellay, breathing disappointment in every line. "Never," says he, "did I find the Prince more angry; for I will disguise nothing, but inform you of the truth without any colouring."—"He not only refused to let me go, but even answered me contumeliously; and this I do not conceal." Irritated, no doubt, by the constraint put upon him, Melancthon then makes a proposal which he is happily unable to carry into effect. "As for the journey, I have promised Voré that, God willing, I will go to Frankfort next spring, and thence, if you think well, come over to you."

Having unbosomed himself to the Chamberlain, he resumed his pen, and the same day (August 28th) addressed the King himself in answer to the letter above translated. But there he said as little as possible beyond general professions of honour and admiration, leaving Voré to tell His Majesty what he had written to Bellay without reserve.*

The Elector John Frederic was busy at the same time writing to the King. He told His Majesty that Melancthon had asked leave to visit France, which he would most readily have allowed, being always glad to gratify the King, especially in matters relating to religion, "for the praise, honour, and glory of God, and for the signal propagation and more extensive and abundant fruit of the Gospel." But the troublous times, he said, and the dispersion of the University in

* Le Plat, tom. ii., pp. 800—802.

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consequence of an epidemic disease in Wittenberg, rendered the presence of Melancthon extremely necessary at home. He promised, however, that if present difficulties were removed, and if the King addressed his request to the Elector himself by letter, the Professor should have permission to take a journey into France. Good wishes follow "for the planting and propagation of the healthful word of the Gospel of Christ, and for the temporal and eternal welfare of the King, the kingdom, and the Church of France."

There was nothing here to be mistaken, no mark of the ignorance and lack of learning constantly attributed by Melancthon to those who expressed their disapprobation of his profuse concessions. And now, as a biographer of Philip Melancthon, I must faithfully complete my account of this remarkable correspondence by adding the judgment of the Elector himself.*

"The Prince hoped Melancthon would acquiesce in the answer to his application lately given him, according to his own promise to the Councillors, and not overlook the weighty reasons laid before him. But what he now said of having already offered to take a journey into France, the Elector could by no means approve, as he ought not to have made any such promise without permission. For Melancthon was not ignorant of how matters went between Cæsar and the Frenchman, and well knew what considerations would weigh with the Elector. The Elector, indeed, had shown himself most ready to promote the Gospel, even in other nations; but it was doubtful, nay, from the writings of the French, more than doubtful, whether any success could be expected in France, while giving place to French counsels would assuredly disturb the peace of Germany. The Elector himself, too, was just going to undertake a journey for settling terms of peace with King Ferdinand; but any one might easily judge how Ferdinand would receive the Elector, if he heard that Melancthon, the

* I translate the summary by Seckendorf (lib. iii., sect. 13) of a document written by the Elector's hand, given to his secretary, Pontanus, to be sent to Melancthon, and preserved in copy in the public archives.

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first theologian of Saxony, was at the very time gone to the capital of a declared enemy of Ferdinand, and especially of Cæsar.

"Let any one consider what Cæsar and all orders of the Empire would think when they heard, that in the Articles of Melancthon himself it was published to foreigners, that religious controversies might be regarded with mutual toleration, so that neither party should condemn the other. This had never been said in the disputes of Protestants with their own brethren; although respect to Cæsar, friendship between the parties, and regard to public peace, might require that it should. It was notorious that they could not agree at Augsburg to have the communion celebrated indifferently in one kind or two; but on account of that single Article, the attempt to come to an agreement was broken off. Every one knew that Melancthon's Articles would be regarded, to the extreme dishonour of Protestants, as a retraction of what they had hitherto professed. If, again, the French were acting deceitfully, the Evangelicals might expect more damage and disgrace than advantage by treating with them. For these and similar reasons, the Elector wrote, he would not consent to the journey of Melancthon into France. But if he fancied that he might take such a step with safe conscience and good faith towards his Prince, let him do it, but without permission, and at his own peril."

In the margin of this rescript the Elector made two notes. *First*, he wondered that Melancthon should trust the French, a people who never had kept faith. *Secondly*, many pious minds were scandalized with that indulgence of his which Melancthon called "moderation," and suspected that he had renounced the Confession of Augsburg, and his own Apology besides.

Some further observations of the Elector in an autograph letter to Pontanus, deserve to be repeated:

"I very much fear that Philip, while he wishes to persuade the King by his own wisdom and industry, is going to give up much that Doctor Martin and other theologians will not concede; and that—as I think I gather from some words of Dr. Martin—quarrels will arise, to

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the grave offence of many, and detriment of the Gospel. Besides, we cannot suppose that the French are acting seriously ; but rather that, having found out the easiness of Philip, they will extract his inmost thoughts, and then defame him for inconstancy. They in France who seem to favour the scheme, are Erasmians rather than Evangelicals. I remember what occurred to myself last year, in the duchy of Cleves: the same will happen to Philip, with great peril of body, soul, and conscience. He will even be asked to defend the unlawful marriage of the Englishman (Henry VIII.). For these, and other reasons, do your best to divert him from this journey. For myself, I am resolved to do without Philip altogether, rather than let him go to France with my good peace and consent."

Thus faded away the dream that, for a time, had put realities all out of sight. Philip in honour at the French court—the Sovereign drinking in his words—the Doctors of every faculty yielding to his arguments—controversies quelled by mutual consent—no more intemperate zeal among the Evangelicals—no more burnings of heretics by Papists—French and German Priests agreeing to accept the Confession of Augsburg—Rome herself placated—a free and Christian Council assembled in Germany to consummate the glorious enterprise of unity—Philip had in universal honour as the pacificator of Christendom—and, last of all, the evangelic sentence engraven on his tomb: "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God." Could any vision be more enchanting?

We follow him to the next meeting of the Princes at Smalcald, in 1537, to ascertain the conclusion of the French affair, and there see him employed by the Germans to deliver an answer in *their* sense—not in his—to his old friend the Chamberlain Bellay, envoy from King Francis, with which answer ended the last semblance of conciliation. In private, we find him suffering from disappointment, for some months, depressed, and portending evil. We see him shuddering at a heavy flash of lightning that struck a church in Wittenberg, wherein he discerns an omen of plagues on Saxony. And if it

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were not that the painful consequences of anxiety in so excellent a man excite compassion, we might smile at the minute simplicity of his friend Camerarius, who droops from the dignity of history, to record how great benefit he derived from a decoction of camomile, and how gratefully he recommended the use of that flower to dyspeptic scholars.

The abundance of mere personal and domestic incidents, noted at this time by his biographer, seems to indicate a partial relaxation of professorial duties, and a retreat from public life. That he visited Tubingen, for the sake of his health; that he fell down stairs; that Erasmus died; that one of his daughters was married; that he lectured on the utility of philosophy; that he devoted some leisure to pondering adverse opinions on the value of astrology in the healing art, and gave sentence in its favour;—these are matters which might furnish a few pages of entertainment; but we pass them by.

THE CONCORD OF WITTENBERG.

Lutheran and Reformed, or, more popularly, Lutheran and Calvinist, are now the designations of the two great divisions of dissenters from the Church of Rome on the continent of Europe. A chief occasion of difference between the two parties, in the very beginning of the Reformation, is stated in my notice of the Conference of Marburg;* but besides the manner of the presence of our Lord in the eucharist, there were other distinctive points of considerable importance, all arising from the principles that predominated on either side, the ecclesiastical or the secular. Actuated by a better spirit, and impelled by the obvious necessity of union in order to resist the common enemy, the leaders of the Reformation often reciprocated overtures of reconciliation; and on all such occasions Melancthon gladly applied himself to his favourite enterprise for making peace.

One afternoon in May, 1536, two Preachers of Upper Germany, Wolfgang Fabricius Capito and Martin Bucer,

* Page 84.

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with some others of lesser name, came into Wittenberg from Basil, where they had been holding a conference with their Swiss brethren, in hope of inducing them to adopt some common standard. After taking refreshment in lodgings provided for them by the Elector, they called on Luther and some of the theologians of the University, to whom they delivered letters of introduction and copies of tractates on the questions in dispute. About three o'clock next day, having perused the writings, and consulted with some brethren, Luther sent the strangers a kind but very firm letter, insisting on the acceptance of one condition before treating of union. He would not hear of concord, unless they would profess freely that "the bread in the supper is the body of Christ." To this they replied in a long letter, containing a declaration that they never had affirmed nor believed "that what is given in the supper is only bread and wine."

This apparent coincidence of belief, however narrow, **was** enough to encourage further intercourse. After some friendly conversations, Melancthon engaged to prepare a form of agreement, containing propositions which all could sign, but necessarily leaving untouched every question that yet remained unsettled, but was not regarded as essential to Christianity, or so grave as to occasion any fatal controversy. The peacemaker exercised his accustomed skill, and eighteen of the most eminent Preachers in Germany subscribed the paper, each adding his proper title, with only one exception, the writer being content with his accustomed signature, *Philippus Melancthon*.

On that day, and for a few days afterwards, the two parties smoked the calumet of peace, and for even a little longer time disputed without anger; but it was not possible to bind themselves or others to abide by any stipulated conclusion. Their principles were different, and are different still. The Lutheran is too sacerdotal in his tastes, and too much like the Romanist in some of his doctrines; while the continental Calvinist has too many political sympathies for an undistracted prosecution of the service of Him whose republic is no more of this world than His kingdom. A third element is wanted, to neutralize and absorb the others, even a paramount regard to all

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that which is Divine in the institutions and sanctions of religion, and real in its enjoyment.

Capito and Bucer wept for joy. Melancthon betrayed surprise at the unexpected success to which his pen contributed; for he had dreaded a meeting of controversialists, and even now advised *silence*, lest any adverse breath should scatter the flimsy fabric. "For," said he, "I should be most unwilling to revive this contest concerning the sacrament, (*περὶ τοῦ μυστηρίου*), and have a weighty reason for giving this advice, of which the clamours of the unlearned shall never dispossess me."*

CARDINAL SADOLET.

I do not suppose that the Princes who honoured the subject of my present study with their letters were all men of so much refinement and simplicity as to appreciate his virtues, and court his correspondence for its own sake.

The Cardinal Jacob Sadolet was one of those who thus addressed him, and Camerarius preserves a singular epistle from that liberal but sagacious personage. He writes from Rome, whither the Pope had called him to take his place in the most noble order of Cardinals. When Bishop of Carpentras, as he tells *his Philip*, he had often read his writings, and admired the elegance of their style and the excellence of his genius. Gradually an affection of kindness towards the author sprang up within his bosom, with a fervent desire to enjoy his friendship. "There was a slight difference of opinion between us, it is true; but that never produces the least discord of feeling in liberally-educated men." He was just about to take his pen to introduce himself to the friendship of Melancthon, when he was summoned to Rome. In Rome, of course, he is far less happy than in the quiet bishopric of Carpentras, and much distracted; but he cannot refrain any longer from sending so learned a man a letter, and entreating the joy of his acquaintance. The Cardinal is not one of those who hate such as differ from him—he favours men of genius—they are far apart in

* Hospinian, *Hist. Sacramentariæ Pars altera*, sub an. 1536.

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place, but one in spirit—he prays to be counted among those who love Melancthon, *and long to see him flourish*—nothing does he more earnestly desire than *to have an opportunity of giving substantial proof of love*—what can he do for him?—to serve him in any way will be more grateful than he has language to express. “Farewell, my most learned Melancthon: favour us who love you so exceedingly.” *

Melancthon had too much good sense to answer this letter of solicitation; yet, two years afterwards, writing to John Sturm at Paris, Sadolet was humble enough to ask what he could do at Rome that would be agreeable to him, to Bucer, and to Melancthon.† Every one did not see through the veil, thin as it was; but Luther did. He interpreted the letter as written by the Pope’s command, and equivalent with the offer of a Cardinal’s hat,—the tender of a price for defection from the cause of truth. But the weakness of Melancthon lay in his theory of conciliation: it was not a defect of moral principle. He maintained a dignified silence, because he saw the snare, and persevered in the performance of his duty.

SMALCALD.

A report reached Germany that the Pope had resolved to summon a Council, and that a Legate would soon bring the bull of indiction. The Princes and representatives of the Evangelical cities, therefore, determined to consult the divines and lawyers on several questions that arose; and particularly whether the Nuncio ought to be admitted, and, if admitted, how he should be treated. Their sentence was that he ought to be admitted, and his letters received, because if the Pope sent them letters, he could not regard the Princes as heretics; and that the Princes might appear, when summoned, but under protest. The Elector, however, judged more wisely, wrote a contrary sentence with his own hand, and directed that,

* I find this in the Familiar Epistles of Sadolet, Ep. cclxxxvii. Roman edition of 1760, but without the name of Melancthon, and mutilated accordingly.

† Jac. Sadoleti Epist. Fam. Romæ, 1760. Ep. cccxxv.

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on the Legate's approach to Saxony, persons were to meet him and send him back.

On the other question, whether the Evangelicals ought to attend the Council, there was great difference of opinion. Luther wrote that *he* would go not personally, but with his prayers and his pen. Several others judged that the Council ought to be convened by Cæsar; and after them Melancthon wrote down the question, "But if they who are not under Cæsar's jurisdiction will not come, *what then?*" This question implied a concession that the Pope should summon, by virtue of his general authority; but in this concession few or none agreed.

Perhaps influenced by his advisers, the Elector subsequently yielded so far as to admit Vorst, the Legate, who presented his credentials at Weimar, January 30th, 1537, and, at the Elector's request, proceeded to Smalcald, where he was admitted, after the Princes had spent ten days in deliberation. Proceedings were for several days interrupted by a sudden and severe illness of Martin Luther, without whom they were unwilling to deliberate; but that interval was profitably employed by Melancthon, whom they requested to write on the power and primacy of the Pope. His judgment was so clearly condemnatory of the Papal pretensions, *as of right*, and as judged by the standard of holy Scripture, that it was honoured with the unanimous approbation of the assembly. Yet he retained the notion that concessions might be made to the Pontiff for the sake of peace; and when the theologians subscribed certain Articles written by Luther, he could not place his own subscription without a note of dissent.

It ran thus:—"I, Philip Melancthon, approve the Articles above, as pious and Christian. But concerning the Pope, I maintain that if he would receive the Gospel, he might be allowed, even by us,—for the sake of peace, and for the common tranquillity of the Christians who are now under him, and hereafter may be under him,—a superiority over the Bishops which he already has of human right." The Pope, however, could not consent to resign his claim to supremacy if it were of Divine right, without relinquishing it altogether; and that so learned a man as Melancthon should have persisted in offering it as

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a voluntary gift from the Protestants themselves, appears almost incredible.

"The ignorant and intemperate sycophants" raised a great clamour against his facility of yielding supremacy to the Pope; but he cherished an assurance of being faithful in a good cause. High examples, he thought, sanctioned the allowance of some things contrary to purer doctrine. Thus the Apostle Paul caused Timothy to be circumcised, and himself submitted to a Jewish vow. To contend and litigate concerning things indifferent was against precept and example too; for Christ Himself commands him whom the adversary compels to go one mile, to go with him twain. Thus, in those days, he placed Papal supremacy among things indifferent.*

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But we rejoice to observe that, during the succession of labours which Melancthon underwent in the Conferences and Diets of Frankfort, Smalcald, Worms, and Ratisbon, all in prosecution of a single object, his judgment made considerable advance towards maturity, and that he still displayed a dignified jealousy for that which he held to be the truth.

The Protestant confederates, having reason to apprehend some warlike manifestation from their adversaries, resolved to meet in Frankfort-on-the-Maine, whither the Elector of Saxony went, and commanded Melancthon to follow him. On the last day of January, 1539, feeble and dispirited, he set out from Wittenberg, and on reaching Frankfort found that the service allotted to himself was to write a paper on Lawful Defence. While he wrote, war threatened, and the sickness of the Landgrave of Hesse aggravated the embarrassment of the Princes. But after long and difficult contentions, the two parties agreed to a suspension of hostilities for fifteen months, within which time the theologians were to hold a conference for the conciliation, if possible, of their conflicting tenets.

Thus relieved, the Saxons returned to await the opening spring in their own dwellings, and pray for more genial

* Seckendorf, lib. iii., sect. 16. *Peselius*, 269—290.

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influences ere another winter should close upon their lands.

Already a beam of better promise burst on them after the death of their most inveterate enemy, George, Duke of Saxony, and the succession to the dukedom of his brother Henry, one of their best friends. To establish churches and schools in the duchy was now the pleasing care devolved on Luther and his faithful coadjutor, who gave their utmost energies to this work; far more healthful occupation than that of treating with foreign Kings for impracticable alliances, straining conscience to effect concord with Zuinglians by help of papers written in a non-natural sense, or forcing it into a *via media* with canonists.

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No doubt the labour did him good, although it overwhelmed his powers; and the first symptom of a severe disease was an apprehension of its approach. Day and night the thought haunted him that he should not live. By day he sank under an unconquerable languor, and at night he dreamt of death.

This disquietude was fearfully aggravated by the conduct of the Landgrave of Hesse, who had committed the very immorality which Melancthon once recommended, as the lesser of two evils, to the King of England. But his perception of sin was now clearer, and he witnessed a practical application of his former doctrine with disgust and shame. "We are disgraced," said he in a letter to Camerarius, "by a certain hateful business, of which I cannot write, and yet I could wish you to know it all; and some day you shall know it, if I live. Now we must commit the whole matter to God." The Landgrave persisted, in spite of remonstrance; and all that Luther and Melancthon could obtain was a promise that he would keep his bigamy a secret. Yet nothing could be more precarious than such a secret; and the dread of a disclosure, to the dishonour of the Reformation, was alone sufficient to break Melancthon's rest.

Assuredly believing himself on the brink of death, he

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made his will, not to bequeath property, for he had little or none, but to place on record a declaration of the ground of his faith and the motives of his conduct, and leave that record to his children and friends.

First, he rendered thanks to God who had called him to repentance, and to a knowledge of the Gospel; and prayed Him, for the sake of His Son, whom He willed to be the victim for our sins, to pardon all his offences, accept him, justify him, hear him graciously, and deliver him from death eternal, "*as I believe indeed He will*." For so He commanded us to believe; and it is impiety to make more of our sins than of the death of the Son of God. *This* I place before all my sins. And I pray that God may confirm these beginnings of faith in me by His Holy Spirit, for the sake of His Son the Mediator. I am indeed distressed because of my sins, and because of the scandals of others; but against all this I set the death of the Son of God, and above sin His grace abounds."

Secondly, he professes that his faith is according to the standard of the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds, and states that it is expounded in his "Common-Places," and in the last edition of his Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, where he has endeavoured to speak explicitly, and without any ambiguity. As to the Lord's supper, he abides by the concord of Wittenberg. He voluntarily joined the Lutheran churches, (*nostris ecclesiis*.) and he judges that they hold the catholic doctrine, and are true churches of Christ; "and therefore I command my children that they remain in our churches, and keep apart from the churches and the company of Papists." This injunction he justifies by pointing out their errors. He further warns his children against the fanatics, the followers of Samosatenus, of Servetus, and of others who dissent from creeds acknowledged. On such particulars he writes very fully.

"I also render thanks to the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther, first, because from him I learnt the Gospel; then, for his singular benevolence towards me, which he has shown by very many acts of kindness; and I desire him to be honoured by my children as much as if he were their father." To the Elector and to his Chancellor

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Pontanus, he also renders thanks; and after their names places those of his brother George and several friends. The last sentences are beautiful:

"But I do not believe that these friendships will be extinguished by my death; rather I think that we shall very soon meet each other in the heavenly life, where we shall be permitted to enjoy our friendship more truly, and our society will be far sweeter. But I pray all to kindly forgive my errors, if in anything I have offended any. Certainly I did not wish to offend them by my petulance. Also I give thanks to all the Doctors in the Academy, and to all my colleagues, for many kind offices in public and for their help in private." *

There was no time for him to brood idly over infirmities or sorrows. Months were wasting, and the Elector again required his attendance at Haguenau to aid in preparation for a colloquy with the Romanists, according to the agreement made at Worms. He left Wittenberg reluctantly. Several masters and students accompanied him out of the city; and as they were crossing the Elbe, he sadly expressed his foreboding in a verse:—

"Viximus in Synodis, et jam moriemur in illis."

"We have lived in Synods, and shall now die in them." At Weimar, the court of John Frederic, he fell sick. The hospitality of the Elector, and the skill and friendly assiduity of an eminent physician, ministered to his necessity, but for some time with little hope of success.

Luther and some other friends hastened to his chamber and found him apparently dying. The eyes were fixed and the jaws fallen. He was insensible and speechless. Struck with horror at the sight, Luther exclaimed, "O my God, how has the enemy spoiled me of this helper!" Turning towards the window, he poured forth an earnest prayer,—a prayer so bold,† so like the man who uttered

* Pezelius, p. 369.

† "Allda muste mir unser Herr Gott herhalten, denn ich warff ihm den Sack für die Thür, und riebe ihm den Ohren mit allen promissionibus exaudiendarum precum die ich aus der heiligen Schrift zu erzählen wuste, dass er mich müste erhören, wo ich anderst seinen Verheissungen trauen sollte."

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it, that even the gentlest version would be unseemly to the English eye. Then, taking his friend's hand, he said, "Philip, be of good courage: you will not die. Although God has reason enough for putting him to death, he does not will the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live. God takes delight in life, not in death. God called into His favour the greatest sinners that ever lived upon earth, Adam and Eve: surely, then, He will not cast off thee, my Philip, or permit thee to perish in thy sin and sorrow. Do not give way to sorrow; do not throw away thy own life; but trust in God, who can kill and make alive again."

The voice of that long-familiar, incomparable friend pierced through the swathe of insensibility, and roused the spirit of the sick man. He gave a sign of consciousness. The bands of death began to loosen, and from that moment health gradually returned. "I should have been extinct," said he, "if I had not been recalled from death at the coming of Luther."

Thus recalled from death, he goes on his way to bear part in the colloquy on articles of faith. Let us observe how he now proceeds, and what is his first public act after this revival.

For it must be evident to any one who narrowly observes the writings of Melancthon, and marks his conduct after the sickness at Weimar, that he then became another man.

To this passage of his biography too much importance can scarcely be attached. If he had died at Weimar, and the judgment of posterity had depended on what is recorded of him up to that time, he would only have passed for a learned, amiable, and piously-disposed man, but inconsistent withal. His correspondence with the Kings of England and France drew forth some signs of a vanity against which few men could be proof, but which would have sadly detracted from his reputation. His casuistry was unsafe. His pertinacity in conceding honour to the Pope and the Romish Bishops was worse than a mere error of judgment; and it would have been mortifying to be compelled by truth to describe the theologian of the Reformation as an advocate of the

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Papacy. Besides this, we must not fail to mark the salutary effect of the personal change which becomes henceforth so conspicuous, as bearing an intimate relation to subsequent events. I venture to think that he then became the subject of that change which can best be expressed by the single word *conversion*. This gave the consistency and force of character which had so long been wanting, and henceforth our great theologian proves the power of the doctrine he has taught.

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Instead of assembling at Haguenau, the disputants are to meet at Worms, and Melancthon proceeds to Gotha, on the way thither. Here we find him writing a Protestation in a spirit of jealousy for the truth, that is no longer spoiled by the predominance of another temper, hitherto so habitually expressed in that favourite Greek word *ἐνυίκεια*, which meant "indulgence." The first sentences, flowing fresh from a mind that has been chastened, nay, *changed* into a loftier and firmer frame, deserve attention :

"We are not ignorant of what profane men say concerning these discords of the Church. Nor are we so devoid of common sense as to be insensible of our own dangers only, and not to give them the most serious consideration. Neither are we so foolishly morose as to depart unnecessarily from the consent of so many ages and nations. But we have weighty, just, and pious reasons for the determination we have taken. We are not willing to quench again that light of the Gospel which, by God's goodness, has been kindled in our churches. We are not willing to establish again old abuses and errors. We hold it to be contrary to Christian truth to give any countenance to injustice and to cruelty.

"Therefore, because the Popes have, from the very beginning of the renewed doctrine, issued against us wicked and atrocious decrees, decrees written in blood, and have continually inflamed Kings and Princes against us, we have always earnestly desired to obtain a true and free judgment of the Church, and offered to plead in our

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own defence. But neither has a free Council yet been summoned, nor has any private Conference been instituted for the sake of searching out the truth."

He then recounts occurrences narrated on these pages, and expresses a hope that as the Emperor has, at length, appointed a Conference, he will allow the truth to be spoken freely in it, according to ancient examples. And he exhorts the adversaries to seek the truth, disentangling themselves from the snares of ambition and avarice. He writes in a strain of piety more fervent than appears in most of his previous papers, and adds expressions quite unlike his former language in regard to the Papacy:

"As we thought the Councils formerly indicted by the Roman Bishop were to be refused for most weighty reasons, so we now testify in this Congress that we disown the authority of the Roman Bishop; nor will we consent to his conveying authority to confer concerning Christian doctrine, nor suffer his Legate to preside in his name." And he does not stay at this point; but, after accusing the Popes of idolatry, tyranny, oppression, and enmity, he writes a sentence which directly contradicts his own long-continued proposals to allow them the primacy: "*Therefore, as it is manifest that the Roman Bishop makes war against the Gospel of the Son of God, we cannot allow him any authority in the Church; and this sentence we will maintain wherever it shall be necessary, in Councils, or in any other honourable Conferences.*" The remainder of the Protest is a justification of this memorable sentence,—the more memorable because written deliberately by the pen of Philip Melancthon.* After this Protest Cardinal Sadolet made him no more overtures from Rome.

On reaching Worms, he perceived indications of a more formidable contest than had been expected. Granville, Orator of Charles V., who then exerted great influence in the Imperial counsels, was likely to be present, not to arbitrate with impartiality, but to sow discord between the Confessionists of Augsburg, or authoritatively to suppress debate. It required little penetration to foresee intrigues, and there was reason to apprehend violence

Pezelius, p. 394.

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also; but Melancthon manifested an unwonted courage, as if to show that he had drunk new life and strength from an immortal fountain.

"If it become my duty," said he to Camerarius, "to make a statement of our case, I will do my best, God helping, to explain those most practical points concerning which we dispute, as clearly, truly, simply, and seriously as possible. This I shall now be able to do so much the more easily, as I have ceased to think of pleasing Princes, and therefore have a far more tranquil mind than formerly. Do you help us with your prayers, and those of your family, and commend us to God." * And again, while wearisome days of suspense were lagging on: "My mind is somewhat more at ease, now that I am thinking of doctrines, and nothing more, and have ceased to concern myself with Princes." †

This turning away of heart from Princes, even from the Princes of his own party, and concentration of thought on doctrines, this elevation of thought from policy to conviction, must have given a sterner air to his conversation, as well as to his letters. His first object was no longer to conciliate men, but to raise them from the depths of error, and to exalt God and truth above all things; and the renovation of purpose was apparent in his daily communications. Thus we hear him telling Luther, ‡ about the middle of December, that, after having refused, in conjunction with his brethren, to accept certain Articles artfully drawn up, or to admit any other arbiter of controversy than the Scripture, as the word of Christ, he was invited to draw up some form of concord; but answered, that instead of attempting to frame any such deceptive agreement, he would declare his thoughts in public.

When Gropper, an Ecclesiastic, who had headed a reformation at Cologne, with a great ostentation of zeal, came to Worms, he began to melt under the smiles of great men, and Melancthon was the first to rebuke his instability. Gropper then "wondered at his vehemence," and wished to have him removed from the

* *Pœliius*, p. 404, Nov. 11th.

† *Ibid.*, p. 405.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 400.

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Conference, lest he who had hitherto been distrusted on the opposite account, should obstruct the progress of conciliation.

When the Pope's Legate, in a meeting of Princes and theologians, had pronounced a smooth oration, and Melancthon was on his feet to answer it, Granville checked him, afraid lest he should say something distasteful to the Legate. "Let him speak," said some one: "he will answer modestly." "I know," returned Granville, "that he is modest when he so pleases." There had been recent evidence of greater sternness of principle, or, as the Ambassador would consider it, less modesty. They knew not what had caused the change, but were compelled to feel it.

A letter addressed to Granville a few days afterwards on behalf of the Protestants was modest, indeed, but firm,* and gave not the slightest intimation of any real concession. Nor does there appear, in the records of this Conference, the faintest sign of vacillation. The proceedings cannot be narrated here in detail; but Melancthon himself shall tell us as much as we are concerned to hear. The day before the Conference, he wrote to Camerarius as follows:—

"As Proteus resumed his proper figure when he had exhausted all his tricks; so our adversaries here, having shifted all their scenes, play over again the first act of their drama. They now begin to hold out some prospect of a meeting. As Lucius Gellius once contended that, public debate being set aside, a few select persons, chosen from both sides, should meet to deliberate concerning the settlement of controversies; so certain of us were not disinclined to follow this advice, either through fear, or merely to gratify Lucius Gellius. If any one desires peace, that man am I; and, for the sake of public tranquillity, I have always felt that many things were to be overlooked. But when they proposed a select colloquy, I told them what I thought, and still think, should be done; namely, an end made of all fictitious pretences to moderation. 'These,' I said, 'I will neither write nor approve of, not even if all the armies of France and Spain

* Pezelius, p. 419.

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are at the gates.' For as Christ was drawing near the cross, He prayed to His Father, 'Father, sanctify them with Thy truth, Thy word is truth.'.....Some persons thought me too violent; but as soon as my mind was known, they gave up all mention of any such private colloquy."*

The proposal, however, had given rise to much useless negotiation; and it was not until January 14th, 1541, that the public disputation began. Eck was appointed to speak on the side of Rome, and Melancthon answered for Protestant Germany. Four days they disputed concerning original sin; and although Eck acknowledged privately to Granville, that in heart he approved the opinion of his antagonist, he had objections enough by rote to spend four days in dealing out "what Aristophanes calls *μαγειρικά ῥήματα*, 'words that cut like knives.' I did not render like for like; but resolved that my answer, notwithstanding, should be seasoned with salt."

Granville, whatever he might think of the debate, resolved to advise his master not to kindle the brands of civil war in Germany on account of religion; and promised that, when he rejoined him at Spire, where the Court then was, he would advise him to restrain the Judges from their deeds of tyranny. Melancthon, with reference to further debate at Ratisbon, declared that he would resist all ensnaring attempts at conciliation, and that he feared no earthly weapons, nor any human force; but only dreaded the craft and sophistry of words. And rejoicing in a good conscience, he wrote: "Here my public actions, by God's help, were honest."....."May God keep us, and deliver us from sycophants!"†

CONFERENCE OF RATISBON.

The time came for Melancthon to set out on his journey to Ratisbon, by command of the Elector, who complied with the desire of the Emperor to so compromise theological differences as to reconcile the two parties. Not sharing in the vain hope which possessed the mind

* Peselius, p. 406.

† Ibid, p. 407.

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of Charles V., he again left his home in early spring, with cheerful submission to the claims of duty. Seated in one of those waggons which the richer Germans began to use as carriages, he was drawn slowly on, beguiling the weariness of the way by composing Latin verses for some familiar friends. His poetic exercises, however, were interrupted by the overturning of the vehicle just as they approached the frontier of the Palatinate, and he entered Ratisbon suffering extreme pain from an injury of his right hand, and not only disabled from writing, except by an amanuensis, but in serious doubt as to the propriety of consenting to another vain attempt at conciliation.

Thither came the Emperor, caring nothing for the truth, but impatient for pacification. There were the Princes of the Augsburg Confession, more determined than ever to make no concession. There were the zealous Romanists, no less resolved to reject every proposal that could not be ratified under the explicit sanction of their Church. And there, also, was a third party, consisting of courtiers, both lay and clerical, whose only aim was to satisfy the Emperor. These persons drew up a scheme of compromise, which their master thankfully patronized, and caused to be laid before the assembly for consideration. All but its promoters derided the incongruous composition, and many cried out that it Melancthonized. Melancthon, as earnestly as any, expressed an unconquerable repugnance, and implored the Emperor not to aggravate the dissensions of Germany by the creation of a third faction. The "hyæna," as the Protestants called that "book of Ratisbon," troubled him day and night, drove sleep away, and haunted him in dreams. An elegant piece of Latin versification perpetuates the memory of one of them, wherein he tells how he saw a monster, part woman, part beast, part reptile, which the congregated Princes were commanding him to portray on canvass. But his hand refused to hold the pencil, and his limbs trembled. He laboured to remonstrate with the Princes for their folly, but his lips refused utterance, and while starting with dread from the fascination of a demon's eyes in the monstrous imperson-

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ation of that mischief, he awoke, bathed in cold sweat, and shivering with terror.*

The formalities of a theological conference were attempted, but without success; and, after staying in Ratisbon for more than four months, the disappointed Emperor was compelled to relinquish the last hope of rejoining the severed members to the body of the Church of Rome, and the Recess of Ratisbon referred the controversy to a General Council, leaving the Protestants free to worship and to preach according to their conscience, until such a Council should assemble.†

Gentle as ever, Melancthon sometimes failed to satisfy the vehemence of the Saxons; and the Elector even complained that he had made some doctrinal concession. But this complaint could not be substantiated; and with sufficient reason on the other side, Charles V. marked Melancthon's opposition to his wishes with displeasure. There is not, I think, any trace of indecision to be found in the copious records of his conduct; but, on the contrary, every evidence that he stood unmoved. Girolamo Negri, a Venetian Canon, who took an active part in the debates, bears an incidental testimony which may be quoted to his honour: "I have spoken with several of these Protestants, with Melancthon and others. They seem to be most resolute in their opinions, and cease not to scatter their bad seed from day to day, by preaching, writing, and all other means possible." ‡

THE ARCHBISHOPRIC OF COLOGNE.

"The Pen of the Reformation" withdrew from Ratisbon, being no longer needed there, and hastened back to Wittenberg. The contusion which had caused him so much inconvenience demanded the care of a more skilful surgeon than those in attendance on the Princes. The fruitless colloquies left no other sensation than that of weariness, not to say disgust; and the decease of some

* Pezelius, p. 453.

† Le Plat, tom. iii., p. 124.

‡ Vinc. Alex. Constantii de Vitâ Hieron. Nigri Commentarius, Romæ, 1767.

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valued friends, during the same toilsome interval, threw a shade of sadness over one of the most loving souls that ever lived. With good reason, then, Melancthon rejoiced to lay his head on his own pillow again, lecture from his own chair, once more devote himself to peaceful studies, and dwell amidst the endearments of his home.

Perhaps the last correspondence of historic value at Ratisbon was held with the French King, to whom he addressed a letter of intercession for some persons then suffering imprisonment for conscience' sake. A renewed invitation from that Sovereign, indirectly given, does not seem to have drawn forth any response; for the salutary change wrought in his mind at Haguenaui produced a corresponding elevation of judgment, and he was content to tread in the open path of duty, without aspiring beyond. He cared less for Princes.

The preface issued with the first collective edition of his works at Wittenberg in 1542, bears the impress of a characteristically calm, philosophic, and Christian mind. The even current of his affairs was briefly interrupted in the year following by a visit to Cologne, to assist, as he trusted, in laying the foundations of a Reformed Church in that city and territory.

Hermann, Archbishop and Elector of Cologne, a Prelate of noble family, bearing unblemished reputation for good morals, of a mild and peaceable disposition, and charitable to the poor, was, until very lately, an approved zealot for the doctrine and claims of Rome. Like many of his mitred brethren, he was very illiterate, and scarcely understood so much as the easy Latin of his Breviary. So bad a reader was he, if we may credit an anecdote related by Maimbourg, that Charles V., who twice heard him say mass, could not understand his reading of the introit. He had sometimes persecuted Protestants, yet sometimes repented of the sentence before it could be carried into execution; and so early as the year 1536, he actually attempted to reform his own clergy, and to explain away some part of the Romish dogmas. As time advanced, however, he began to see the worthlessness of such a reformation, which in reality was nothing more than the masked Romanism of a Bossuet,

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or the delusive liberality of a Jesuit. In 1539, therefore, he sent one Peter Medmann to Frankfort, to consult with Melancthon, who was then in that city, and invite him to come over to his help. This drew a friendly letter from Melancthon, but nothing more at that time; and it devolved on Martin Bucer to go from Strasbourg to the Archbishop in 1541, and again in 1542, to preach in Bonn, yet with a reserve that failed to satisfy those who desired to hear the truth set forth with the honesty which truth demands.

The Archbishop, therefore, again solicited John Frederic to allow Melancthon to visit him in Bonn, in order to afford the benefit of his counsels, for the accomplishment of the sacred undertaking. With leave of absence for only six or seven weeks,—so unwilling was the Elector to miss his services,—Melancthon repaired to Bonn. The Archbishop provided for the expenses of his journey; but John Frederic gave him a hundred florins for the same use, and two armed Knights as a guard of honour. Melancthon could not refuse the Knights; but, as he never occupied the pulpit, he begged for the more appropriate assistance of two Preachers, who might supply his defect there, and indoctrinate the clergy and laity of Bonn.

Thus attended, he hastened to assist Hermann. The people, he says, were utterly given to idolatry; and the clergy were divided, some being favourable to reformation, and others adverse. The members of the Academy of Bonn, although not warm in the cause of their Prince-Prelate, disapproved of the violent opposition of some Canons, and refused to accept the dedication of a book written against Bucer and the Lutherans. The book was published, notwithstanding; and Melancthon wrote one in reply. He also drew up a scheme of reformation for that diocese alone, less bold than it would have been if written for a people entirely consentient. Hermann heard and approved the document, and commanded it to be enforced. But the Pope anathematized this aged Archbishop, and bestowed the office on Gropper, his coadjutor. The Archbishop maintained his integrity, but lost the chief part of his revenue, and soon quitted the field of

THE SEE OF MERSEBURG.

contest for a world where anathemas have no power. Gropper and the Priests found no difficulty in trampling out the last vestige of Hermann's reformation; and Melancthon could point to Cologne for a new example of the futility of every effort to perform by authority a work that can only be effected by the force of unconstrained conviction, and by the grace of God. This is what he always taught.*

THE SEE OF MERSEBURG.

Far more satisfactory was a mission to Merseburg, and far more worthy of remembrance the ecclesiastical revolution there effected.

Sigismund von Lindenau, Bishop of Merseburg, died in the old superstition in the year 1544, leaving the diocese almost entirely Lutheran. The Canons—except three that were absent—unanimously committed the diocese to the charge of Augustus Duke of Saxony, then a youth of eighteen. They did not nominate a Bishop, neither did they undertake to extinguish the bishopric, but left the see vacant. Augustus, for his part, proceeded with equal caution, and, retaining only the administration of the revenue, he appointed the senior Canon to be governor of the diocese in spirituals. If, therefore, episcopacy had been preserved by the Lutheran Church, this transaction would not yet have interfered with the due appointment of the Canon, or of any other person, to the vacant see, at some future time. It is a mistake, therefore, to call the ceremony which followed an episcopal ordination.†

The Canon was George Prince of Anhalt, who entered the priesthood when he was a younger brother, with no prospect of succession to the principality; but after the visit of Tetzel with his indulgences, he read Luther's tractates on various subjects, and not only became convinced of the truth of Luther's doctrine, but deeply impressed with its importance to himself. From the perusal of

* Seckendorf., lib. iii., sect. 27.

† As it is called by an English biographer of Melancthon. See *Life of Philip Melancthon*, by Francis Augustus Cox, A.M. London, 1817. P. 430.

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those tracts he advanced to that of the holy Scriptures, and to these he added the writings of the early Fathers. With the devotedness of an earnest theologian, he strove to master the great controversy of his age; but also sought wisdom from the Father of lights, and was heard to pour forth a heaven-inspired prayer, "Deal with Thy servant according unto Thy mercy, and teach me Thy statutes." Prince George, then, was not a novice; but must have been superior to the majority of German Priests and Bishops in his day.

At first, Luther objected to this partition of the temporalities and spiritualities of Merseburg between a Duke of Saxony and the Prince of Anhalt, suspecting these personages of an attempt to introduce a new method of spoliation of church-property; but, on better information, he gave the arrangement his full concurrence.

Prince George, although cordially attached to the cause of the Reformation, and supported by his colleagues in the Chapter, would not consent to assume the spiritual administration of the diocese until he had consulted theologians who ranked high in the Reformed Church of Saxony, and of whom Luther and Melancthon were confessedly the chief. These all agreed to the appointment: a large number assembled at Merseburg, and appended their signatures to a paper drawn up by Melancthon, acknowledging the goodness of God, who ordained the ministry of the Gospel to continue to the end of time, who commanded the church to call fit persons to be Ministers, and "promised that by their voice He would give remission of sins, the Holy Spirit, life, and eternal righteousness;" praying that the light of the Gospel might not be extinguished, but faithful defenders and guardians of its healthful doctrine be raised up. They said that when this Prince George, &c., was rightly and piously called to help in the discharge of the ecclesiastical office in the diocese of Merseburg,* learned and grave men, who governed neighbouring churches, were called together after the custom of the primitive churches, that

* ——"ad functionem muneris ecclesiastici adjuvandam in episcopatu Mersburgensi." Certainly this does not describe the consecration of a Bishop, yet it acknowledges a bishopric.

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they might add to this vocation the public testimony of ordination. They then attest his fitness. They declare this testimony by the imposition of hands; they commend to him the ministry of preaching the Gospel, and administering the sacraments. Quoting the example of St. Paul in his charge to Titus, they bid the ordained to know that the word of the Apostle instructs him to ordain Priests to teach and govern churches, and to inspect their teaching and their lives. After a few sentences of encouragement, with words of Scripture, the document is dated August 3d, 1545, in Merseburg, and the subscriptions follow.

Here is the first ecclesiastical solemnity of the kind, as I think, recorded in the Lutheran Church, the precedent and type of the ordination of Superintendents, as afterwards established. Having honourably discharged the duties of this office eight years, Prince George died in peace.

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While the defections of Cologne and Merseburg exasperated the anger of the Pope, the reluctance of the Elector John Frederic and his associates to renew hopeless negotiations provoked the Emperor to threaten them with war. The Council so long spoken of, but now refused by the Protestants, had been summoned by Paul III. for more than three years past, and would soon be opened in Trent, with the declared object of putting down heresy. Persecution, too, raged with increasing violence, prisons were crowded, and martyr-fires blazed. The days of deliberation and conference were past, and there was reason to fear that the horrors of civil war would be let loose all over Germany.

Such was the state of things when Luther was called on by one of the Counts of Mansfeld to visit Eisleben, and endeavour to settle a dispute concerning the management and revenue of some rich copper and silver mines in that province. By permission of the Elector, he accepted the invitation, and set out for Eisleben (January 14th, 1546), accompanied by Justus Jonas and Melancthon.

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Nothing but the hope of appeasing a fatal quarrel, and restoring peace to the population of that town, could have induced him to undertake the journey. "I am old," said he,—for he had counted sixty-three winters,—“decrepid, slow, weary, cold, and now blind of one eye. Nearly in my grave, I hoped I should be allowed rest, which is now due to me; but as if I had never done, written, spoken anything, I am still overwhelmed with things which have to be written, spoken, done, and put out of hand.”

Weary as he was, Luther and his friends went to Eisleben; and having made a good beginning of their pacific arbitration, returned to Wittenberg after the absence of a very few days, in which time Melancthon saw with regret his revered friend taken to and fro in a carriage on account of weakness, but still eloquent in the pulpit, and cheerful in conversation. On the 23d of January, in the depth of winter, Luther returned to Eisleben, hoping to complete his work of reconciliation, and reached the place on the 28th, not without fatigue, and peril too. His companions this time were Justus Jonas and his three younger sons; for Melancthon remained at home, employed in the duties of his office as lecturer in the University. On approaching Eisleben, Luther was met by the Counts and a guard of honour, and thus entered the town, little thinking that he should not leave it alive. On the evening of February 17th, he was taken suddenly ill, and before the next day-dawn breathed his last. We have the best authenticated accounts of the manner of his death, after earnest prayer and with unshaken trust in God, surrounded by those three sons of his and some long-faithful friends, in the very town where, as he then reminded them, he was born and baptized.

"He died," said Maimbourg, "with very little ceremony." "But what ceremony," asks Seckendorf, "would Maimbourg wish Luther to have had? Just such ceremony as attended the death of Huss at Constance, or that of the persons whom Inquisitors burn alive in Spain."

It was a mournful day for Melancthon when a messenger called him to Luther's house in Wittenberg, where he found Catherine Bore a widow, weeping over a letter

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written by the hand of the Elector Frederic, to announce her husband's death. An unbroken friendship of twenty-eight years had united Luther and Melancthon so intimately, that nothing could ever alienate them from each other. Philip often deplored the rude vehemence of Martin, and Martin as often censured the extreme gentleness of Philip. False friends and open enemies often strove to kindle strife between them; but they strove in vain. No envy nor misgiving lurked in the breast of either, nor had ever been suffered to linger there: for, however dissimilar in every other point of character, they were both equally honest, and, with all his infirmities, each of them was adorned with childlike, pure simplicity.

On the very day of his death, the Counts of Mansfeld signed the deed of reconciliation prepared by Luther. They earnestly wished to give his body honourable burial in his native town; but the Elector required it to be brought to Wittenberg, and they could only take part in rendering funereal honours. All the chief men of Eisleben, a large company of noble matrons, and a countless multitude of people, crowded to the principal church, where Justus Jonas delivered a funeral oration; and ten citizens kept watch around the bier all night. From Eisleben to Wittenberg, resting at each of the intermediate towns, the bearers of those venerated remains moved slowly along roads lined with sorrowing spectators: as they approached the towns, the ways were often choked with people; and when the bells tolled the death-knell, bursts of wailing told how the heart of Saxony was wounded by the sudden stroke that cut off the man whose undaunted piety had won for them the boon of spiritual freedom.

On Monday, February 22d, 1546, the procession approached Wittenberg. The two Counts of Mansfeld, with forty-five armed Knights, rode first. At the city-gate, by command of John Frederic, the Rector, Doctors, Masters, and students of the University, with the entire Senate, were waiting. There the Ministers of the Gospel with the University moved in order, singing Christian hymns, and preceded by the Magistrates on horseback; then the Counts and their horsemen; then the body on its car. In a humbler carriage, Catherine, with her

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daughter, and some ladies: after her the three sons, John, Paul, and Martin; James Luther, a citizen of Mansfeld, brother of the deceased, two nephews, and other relatives; the Rector of the University and some students, sons of Princes, Counts, and Barons. After these came Gregory Pontanus, Philip Melancthon, Justus Jonas, Pomeranus, Caspar Cruciger, and other chief men of the University and city; Doctors, Masters, Senators, students, and a long train of householders. Not content to be mere spectators, widows, wives, maidens, and even children, followed in spontaneous procession, not silent either, but allowing vent to a sorrow that could not be repressed. As the band of singers went before, the sound of weeping filled the distance,—the only sound that in that hour could be heard in Wittenberg. Never had so great a multitude been seen there. The market-place was crowded; the streets were crowded. For all to witness the sad spectacle was impossible; but they knew the hour of mourning, and came to stand within the walls of Wittenberg, and weep there during the mournful ceremonial.*

The corpse of Luther was taken into the castle-church, and set down beside the pulpit. After a funeral-hymn, the venerable Pomeranus ascended the pulpit, and delivered to the dense congregation a pious and devout sermon. The sermon being ended, Melancthon took his place, and, breaking silence with difficulty, pronounced an eloquent oration, which is still preserved, and shows that he did not waste that precious opportunity in recounting only the praises of the deceased "as the Heathen did." Rather, he admonished the assemblage, in which were the most influential men in Saxony, to fulfil their duty in governing the State, and in guarding against dangers then threatening the Church.

"For although profane men think, amidst the confusion of the present life, that all things come to pass by chance, we, assured by many clear testimonies from the word of God, must separate the church from the profane multitude, and maintain that it is governed and preserved by Him. Let us regard its polity aright; let us acknow-

* Seckendorf, lib. iii., sect. 36.

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ledge its true governors; let us consider how men are to be educated for this office; and let us choose fit persons to be guides and teachers, whom we may piously follow and revere. As often as mention is made of that reverend man Martin Luther, our most beloved father and instructor, we must necessarily think and speak of these things. Many wicked men have bitterly hated him; but we who know that he was divinely raised up to be a Minister of the Gospel, may love him, and collect evidence to show that his teaching did not consist in a reckless propagation of seditious opinions, as men without religion think.

“And because the fall of great governors frequently portends ruin to posterity, I, and all to whom the office of teaching is confided, entreat you to consider the perils that are now abounding in the world. *There* the Turks carry all before them, and *here* other foes threaten us with civil war. On all sides you hear the insolence of men who no longer fear the censure of Luther, and with greater audacity than ever seek to corrupt the doctrine which has been rightly taught. That God may avert these evils, let us be more diligent in ordering our lives and prosecuting our studies, ever keeping this fixed in our minds, that so long as we retain the pure doctrine of the Gospel, so long as we hear it, learn it, love it, we shall be the dwelling and the church of God: as says the Son of God, ‘If any one loveth Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him.’” *

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We cannot understand the position of Melancthon, nor intelligently pursue the incidents of his private life, without taking a rapid survey of some chief transactions of this time.

Before the death of Luther, the Council of Trent had held its first session (December 13th, 1545). The Protestants, as we have heard, demanded a free Council in Germany, to be convened by the Emperor and Princes, at

* Declamationum D. Ph. Melanthonis, tom. iii., p. 749.

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historical comment on some passages of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount:

"We also pray Thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ Thy Son, to give these lands a pious, salutary, and tranquil government, and preserve His Majesty the Emperor, and our Princes, and so rule them by Thy Holy Spirit, that all their government may promote Thy glory, and be peaceful and healthful to their subjects. Confirm our Princes, also, in their pious purpose of preserving Thy honour, true doctrine, and honesty of discipline. And, in Thy clemency, govern and preserve the Magistrates of this city."

As Maurice and his troops approached Wittenberg, the members of the University fled. Melancthon, with his wife and family, betook themselves to the town of Zerbst, where he was welcomed with the most cordial hospitality, and found shelter for nearly a year. His correspondence during this time is replete with piety, patriotism, earnest solicitude for the preservation and prosperity of his Church, and fervent kindness towards his friends. We find him interceding with a person of rank for some jurisconsults, physicians, professors of languages and mathematics, whom the enemy found in Wittenberg, as well as for "Pastor Pomeranus and his Deacons, and Doctor Cruciger," in consideration of their sacred office and their age.

The gates of Wittenberg were never shut against him; and we may note that a curious dream, mentioned by Melchior Adam, occurred on one of his visits to his colleagues. On the night of the 9th of April, he dreamt that he was reading a Greek book, and fell on these words, *Τιμόθεον ναυμαχοῦντα ἀλῶναι*. How to translate them he could not decide. The sentence followed him when awake. Next day, which was Easter-Sunday, it still haunted him in church; and he could not help repeating it to his colleagues, as an oracular sentence that he knew not how to interpret. Is it *him who fears God in battle take?* or is it *he who fears God in battle takes?* And what of a *sea-fight?* and who is *he?* Melancthon never passed over a dream, or an omen, without essaying to interpret it; nor did he fail to try astrology, if Scrip-

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ture, or history, or grammar refused to furnish a solution. But after waiting a fortnight, the event, as he thought, explained the dream. The Timotheos, or God-fearer, was the Elector John Frederic. He was *ναυμαχῶν*, doing battle, not on the sea indeed, but on the river Elbe. He was *taken* by the Imperial cavalry on the bank, and made prisoner. If this was a fulfilment of the dream, it was a very sad one; but no doubt it confirmed Melancthon's faith in dreams, if that faith needed confirmation.

Not only was the Elector a prisoner of war, but the Landgrave also. These two chief supporters of religious liberty were fallen under the vengeance of their Sovereign, strangely allied with the Italian Pontiff for the ruin of his own subjects. Charles V. then took possession of Augsburg, changed the Magistrates, called together a Diet, which, under terror of the sword, agreed to a scheme of compromise resembling that one rejected at Ratisbon in 1541, but in many respects worse, and pronounced it binding on all parties until the Council should decide. This was the *Interim*, so called, a Romish compilation, containing no substantial concession to the Protestants, but a few half-indulgent Articles, which were only to be held as valid until the ruling power could set them aside.

The controversy and negotiations which arose out of this Interim, all came under the eye of Melancthon, and engaged him in anxious research and correspondence with all parts of Protestant Germany. The usurper, Maurice, found it necessary to solicit his judgment, which was given in the most explicit language; and either singly, or associated with Caspar Cruciger, George Major, John Pfeffinger, John Bugenhagen, Sebastian Froschel, and probably some others, he constantly issued counsels and instructions to the Pastors and Preachers, and answered the questions that were laid before him. No fewer than eight assemblies were convened by Maurice in this year, and three in the year following, on occasion of the Interim; and Melancthon was present at all of them except the first. The activity of this body of confessors, and the firmness of the free cities, presented a barrier that not even the Italian, Spanish, and German hosts of the Emperor and Pope could overcome. The Elector

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displayed no less constancy in his prison than the theologians in their chambers. In Suabia and on the Rhine, four hundred Pastors, ejected from their dwellings, suffered loss of all things for the sake of Christ. The populations of the oppressed states were impatient under the indignities and violence inflicted on them. The King of France, dreading the advances of his rival, sent money to the Protestant states to encourage and aid them in prosecuting the war, even while he suffered the Reformed to be imprisoned and slain in his own dominions. The Pope himself, alarmed at the power suddenly assumed by his ally, secretly employed every practicable stratagem to counteract the war he had invited and proclaimed. By the diligence of the Legates the Council of Trent was divided against itself; the Papal faction, under pretence of an epidemic, removed to Bologna, while the Imperial faction persisted in sitting in Trent. And even the Interim, although framed for the extinction of heresy, provoked the Pope and Cardinals to anger, because it was framed under the authority of the Emperor, by a Diet, which they thought—and we should think the same—had no right to enact schemes of doctrine and worship. Hence came embarrassment to the cause of Imperial ambition, and a check to Papal tyranny, both which made it impossible to enforce the conditions of the Interim, and left Melancthon and his helpers in possession of their strong-hold—scriptural truth.*

Three Papal Legates went over Germany from city to city, with instructions to dispense, as gracefully as possible, with submissions to the Interim which they might perceive it impossible to exact; while the Emperor himself went into Belgium to deliver the government of the Netherlands to his son Philip, prudently withdrawing from the seat of a war that he feared to prosecute. Every where—even in France—the name of Melancthon, once lauded as the impersonation of gentleness, was numbered with those of men most hated.

* The collection of Pezelius, that of Le Plat, the brief summary of Melchior Adam, the discursive biography of Camerarius, and the letters of Melancthon, are our chief authorities for this section. Minute references are not necessary.

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Neither able nor willing to suppress his grief, Melancthon complained aloud of the miseries inflicted on his country; and his words, caught up and exaggerated by the Imperialists, were carried to their master as evidence that he, and he alone, was the obstacle to the pacification of Germany. If that was true, the remedy was obvious, and he was on the point of imprisonment, perhaps of death, when Maurice, now returning secretly to the cause he had deserted, interceded for him, and prevailed. "If I must speak my opinion," said Melancthon at this very moment, "although I see that the Emperor is excessively angry with me, I will answer plainly and Socratically, that I do not assent to those sophisms" of the Interim. "And neither will I assent; although I will make no opposition to prevent the Princes from constituting the commonwealth in their own way, if our administrations fail. As long as I live I will act as I have acted hitherto; wherever I am I will speak as I have hitherto spoken; everywhere I will carry in my bosom the same devotion towards my God, and will speak with my accustomed modesty, without raising any factions"—*ἀνευ σφάσεων*.

Domestic affliction bore heavily on him at this time. A tenderly-beloved daughter died in Prussia, in circumstances which greatly aggravated the bereavement. But private sorrows were light in comparison with those that oppressed him while the scourge of war plagued his country, and the instability of timid politicians spoiled the confidence of the people in those above them.

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We must now follow Melancthon in his relation to the Council of Trent.

Julius III. received the adoration of the Sacred College on the 8th of February, 1550, the Cardinals having previously agreed that, whoever was chosen Pope should employ his utmost diligence to conduct to its desired end "the most holy universal Council for the extirpation of heresies, and for the reformation of the universal Church;" no reformation to be valid that was not "according

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to canonical sanctions and the decrees of holy fathers," that is to say, of preceding Popes. From such a sort of reformation Lutheran and Zuinglian heretics had nothing to hope. His predecessor, Paul III., had dissolved his own Council at Bologna a few weeks before his death, and at the same time recalled the Imperialist Prelates who remained in Trent. But it was not until the close of the same year that Paul so far came to an understanding with the Emperor as to issue a bull for the renewal of the Council. The "Fathers" consequently assembled on the 1st of May, and agreed to hold a solemn session on the 1st of September, 1551.

The interval between the accession of Julius and the opening of the Council was spent in difficult negotiations between the Emperor and the Pontiff. The former, after much labour, succeeded in forcing a reluctant consent from the Protestant representatives at Augsburg, to submit to the Council. But all this time the question was agitated how far that submission should extend, and under what conditions it might be rendered.

Between those two potentates, be it observed, this continual struggle was neither more nor less than a contention for superior power, which Melancthon could not but feel when he heard of the proceedings in Augsburg of that Emperor whose first appearance filled him with admiration in the same city twenty years before. Ten Pastors, with several schoolmasters, were suddenly arrested, and brought into the presence of Granville, Bishop of Arras, a great man with the Emperor. The Bishop, assisted by several of the Imperial Councillors, held a court of Inquisition over them, convicted them of heresy, and banished them from Augsburg. How could German Protestants hope for protection at the Council, if the Emperor, not content with waging war upon them, and taking their Princes into custody, established a new kind of Inquisition to eject their Ministers and disperse their schools?

This measure must have been intended to intimidate; but there is no trace of intimidation in the counsels of Melancthon.

The question arose "whether, as it is acknowledged that there should be synodal judgments in the Church,

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men were to be bound to obey every such judgment without refusal, as it is necessary to obey under civil governments?"

Melancthon delivered an elaborate and very clear answer to this effect:—

The saying of Simonides is too true, that τὸ δοκεῖν βιάζεται τὴν ἀλήθειαν, "opinion does violence to truth." An opinion passes current, yet it has never been tested by examination, that the true Church is a polity, resembling a state which confides to judges the administration of the royal power, —a power which must necessarily be obeyed. But the Church is very unlike civil states. In the Church the sentences of judges are binding, not by royal or pretorial authority, but because they agree with divinely revealed doctrine. And if a judicial sentence does not agree therewith, there is a higher sentence to be followed: "If any man teach another Gospel, let him be accursed." Therefore, for example, it was found necessary to resist the Arian Council of Sirmium, with its multitude of Bishops both European and Asiatic. If they object that Councils become useless if they be resisted, my answer is, that, in case of resistance, the final judgment must be left with God, who will subdue those who resist unjustly, as He subdued the Jews, who resisted the Apostles. It is also certain that great controversies in the Church have never yet been settled by sentence of Councils: for God only can conquer the enemies of truth. Yet nothing could be more lovely than a pious Council, where truth would be sought out sincerely, and God would be glorified by the decision. We can conceive of such an assemblage, an angelic choir, singing harmoniously their "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will toward men;" but when wicked men, possessing power, form themselves into Councils, as lately in Trent and Bologna, they must necessarily be resisted. The decree of Trent, which commands us always to doubt whether we are in grace, contradicts the Gospel, is a manifest error, and an example of judgments to be rejected. A meeting of the Papal faction, an assemblage of men polluted with idolatry and lewdness, blinded with error, and bent on confirming the tyranny of their master, is not to be compared with the

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venerable assemblies of Jerusalem or Nice. Such Councils are not free; for both parties cannot have an equal hearing in them: and if it would be wrong to promise obedience beforehand to a Council that might possibly decide contrary to the word of God, much worse would it be to make the promise to one of this description that would certainly do so. Many say that as men cannot agree on the meaning of Scripture, Councils are necessary to make an end of controversy; but assuredly the word of God is clear in all things necessary for salvation. God has not delivered His true, certain, firm, unchangeable doctrine in doubtful words; but in explicit language, as the Psalmist says, "Thy word is a lantern unto my feet."

Then came another question: "If the Pope of Rome, and other Bishops, will not convene a Synod, may the Emperor convene one, provided that he calls together Bishops and others competent to arrive at a pious settlement of controversies?"

To this question his answer was very short. He endeavoured to maintain the affirmative; but his precedents were only to be found in the acts of Emperors who summoned Councils; and it is worthy of observation, that he did not produce a single passage of Scripture in confirmation of a position which, if admitted, would have made the temporal Prince dictator over the Church. Yet he followed the light he had.*

Maurice, having consented to appear in person or by deputy, commanded Melancthon to prepare a summary of doctrine, which might be read, as the Confession had been read at Augsburg. I turn to the first volume of his works,† and find the document intituled, "Confession of Doctrine of the Saxon Churches." The words of the Psalmist are prefixed, "I will speak of Thy testimonies in the presence of Kings, and I shall not be confounded." In a short address to the reader, the author states that he has followed the Confession of Augsburg, but written on some points more fully. He asks a candid hearing, hopes for "the opinions of pious and learned men, who will give a fair and equitable judgment," and appeals to such, but makes no allusion to the Council. A subscrip-

* Pezelius, ii. 121, *seq.*

† Wittebergæ, MDLXII.

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tion follows, without the slightest note of reservation, from the hands of thirty theologians of Saxony, besides his own. The date is July 10th, 1551. In addition to their subscription for Saxony, the Legates of several other states added their declarations of adhesion.*

While Melancthon and the other theologians were thus engaged, the Pontificate and the Empire pursued their contest for ascendancy. Charles, at Augsburg, urged the Protestants to go to the Council. The Protestants would only consent to do so on condition that the decisions of the Council previously assembled at Trent should be revised; that the theologians of the Augsburg Confession should not only be heard in Council, but also vote; that the Pope should not preside, but submit himself to the Council as well as others, and release the Bishops from the oath taken at consecration, leaving them free to speak without restraint. The Emperor met these demands with a complaint that the Protestants had not observed his Interim; but he also complained that the Romish Ecclesiastics had not carried into effect his regulations for their own reformation. The Protestants alleged that it was not possible to enforce that odious Interim on the people, and the Priests confessed that its regulations were impracticable. The Emperor, through the Nuncio, begged the Pope to send such a bull as might be published with least offence, and give him a draft of it beforehand; but Julius, not regarding these requests, thought fit to parade his own dignity by sending a bull to Augsburg without any previous exhibition of its contents to the Emperor, or publication in Rome, and therein declared that he would summon, direct, and preside over the Council, which was to meet in continuation of that already held in Trent.

The Emperor, assured by his Ministers that this bull would disgust the Protestants, conferred with the Nuncio, and charged his Ambassador at Rome to procure, if possible, a revocation of the missive. The Amba-

* Those of John, Marquis of Brandenburg; Count Gebhard of Mansfeld; George Frederick, Marquis of Brandenburg; from the Counts of Mansfeld (in addition to that from Count Gebhard) from Strasburg; and from the Synod of Citerior Pomerania.

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sador, a clever Spaniard, represented to the Pope that as wild beasts, to be taken in the snares, must not be irritated, lest they grow too furious to be caught; even so the Lutheran beasts ought to be dealt gently with, and the apparatus prepared for entrapping them be concealed until gentle dealing had brought them up to Trent. The Pope haughtily replied, that he could not condescend to conceal his power, or hide his lamp under a bushel; but would proclaim his high prerogative, both in season and out of season. The Ambassador reminded him of the condescension of St. Paul, who, though free from all men, made himself servant of all, that he might gain the more. Nothing softened, Julius instantly published the bull on the gates of St. Peter and St. John, and sent copies to all Archbishops and Bishops.

No sooner was this document read in the Diet, than the Protestants withdrew their promise—such as it was—to consent to the Council; and the Romanists, scarcely less displeased with the Pope's unseasonable harshness, refused to attend it.

To overcome the repugnance of both parties, and engage them to support his Imperial dignity, Charles promised to protect the Protestants, and to assure the rights of all, giving them the word of an Emperor, not that he would attend the Council in person, but that he would be near enough to make his influence felt, and compel justice to be done. In a style agreeable to this promise, he published the Recess of February 13th, 1551. The Confessionists of Augsburg thereupon took courage, and Melancthon wrote the Confession of the Saxon Churches, to be read before the Council.

A safe-conduct from the Emperor added to their confidence; and a proclamation of jubilee, with prayers for the good success of the Council, written more pleasantly than the bull of resumption, threw an air of festivity around the Council, and turned it to pecuniary profit for the Court of Rome. The Belgic provinces led the way of benevolence by contributing maintenance for sixty persons at Trent for one year; and the Pope was careful to find money for the poor Italian Bishops who went thither as his pensioners to do his work. Another

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safe-conduct from the Council graciously assured the Protestants of liberty to come and return, to speak, treat, and dispute, but not to vote; and, in special tenderness, allowed them to appear amongst the fathers, "even if their delinquencies should be enormous, and savouring of heresy!"

Amongst the persons appointed by Duke Maurice to go from Saxony was Philip Melancthon; and he prepared for departure with his usual promptitude. We find him expressing his willingness to proceed when orders shall come from the Duke, and a safe-conduct from Trent. He hears that the Emperor has desired the representatives of Wurtemberg and Strasburg to hasten the arrival of Doctors from their churches; and is of opinion that it would be wrong to exhibit, by delay, any appearance of contumacy. He further advises, in a letter from Nuremberg to the Chancellor of Anspach, the theologians from the various states and cities to assemble at some convenient place, and enter Trent in one body.

The credentials for Melancthon and his companions, which received the signature of Duke Maurice at Dresden, January 13th, 1552, were drawn up by himself, with careful avoidance of a word that could be construed into recognition of Papal authority. The Elector, in adopting them, tells the "most reverend lords and reverend fathers," that, as the Emperor had desired some to be sent to the Synod from the churches under his government, he was not willing to refuse, especially as he hoped that by their means truth might be brought to light, for the glory of God, and pious and perpetual concord in all the churches of the world. He therefore sent Erasmus Sarcerius, Valentine Pacæus, and Philip Melancthon, knowing them to be honest and virtuous men, friendly to peace, and desirous of concord. He asks for them a kind hearing while they publicly expound what their churches teach, by common consent, concerning all the points of controversy.

In this paper Melancthon, under the signature of Maurice, reminds the "fathers" that God the Judge, and the universal church in heaven and in earth, are watching and waiting their decisions: "First, that the glory of the

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Son of God may be indeed made manifest; and then, that such a concord may be attained that old abuses be not thereby established. Tranquillity without truth cannot be agreeable to God, neither can it be lasting."

Pope Julius, who never allowed that Protestants were to be dealt with on equal terms, instructed his Legates at the Council, before proceeding to treat with "the heretics," to require them to agree concerning both the judgment and the judge; to confess that there is but one Church on earth, having Christ's Vicar as its head; that a Council summoned and approved by him represents the universal Church; and that they will admit and obey its determinations and decrees. If the heretics refuse this, they must not be heard; for he who doubts, is devoid of the first principles of faith. In that case they must be treated as schismatics and heretics condemned, with whom it is not lawful to have any dealings. If they admit the pretensions of the Pope, their complaints—not their arguments—may be heard graciously.

The "Orators" of Saxony having appeared in the Council, they and the fathers guarded, by every possible expedient, against even the appearance of concession, and delivered a Confession of Faith and orations on behalf of Protestant Germany, with great courtesy; but they only received the sullen and uncourteous acknowledgment of a single sentence: "This holy and ecumenical Synod has heard what your worthinesses have related, and will deliberate on all of it." This conveyed no promise of mutual discussion; but some Germans there were in Trent whose wishes persuaded them to hope for more than the Council engaged to give, and to long for the arrival of Melancthon and his companions.

These were on their way, waiting at Nuremberg, as we have said, for instructions from Duke Maurice, and for the safe-conduct from the Council, and assured, by letters from Trent, that their own friends there expected them with impatience. But neither instructions nor safe-conduct came. Suspense grew into impatience, and impatience into mistrust. Melancthon was endeavouring to beguile the weariness of waiting by the delivery of a few lectures in the University, when intelligence came that

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Maurice, having satisfied his ambition by being made Elector of Saxony instead of the captive Frederic, now seeing the Emperor in new difficulties, chose to take up arms against him for the release of his old friend the Landgrave of Hesse, whom he had weakly or treacherously betrayed into his power. The theologians, it is true, might have gone forward, and left the Emperor and Duke to fight out their battle; but Melancthon well knew that the Imperial faction at Trent would now regard him only as representing their master's enemy, while the Papists would certainly spurn him as a heretic. Glad, therefore, that a carriage could not be obtained at Nuremberg to take on the party, he hastened back again to Wittenberg. His reasons for making this retreat appear in a letter to George, Prince of Anhalt. "Although I know that there are many unlearned and bad men in Trent, I would have proceeded thither, if Germany had been tranquil. But now, partly influenced by grief, and partly by the consideration that it would be unseasonable to carry on a disputation in the Synod concerning the authority of Pontiffs, if that authority was elsewhere annihilated by force of arms, I have returned."

Many thought, on the contrary, that if he had made his appearance in the Council, expounded further the faith of the Saxon Churches, and answered the objections, and refuted the calumnies of the adversaries, the cause of the Reformation would have gained credit. They had not seen those instructions of Pope Julius to his Legates which I have just quoted, and might not know that, in spite of the power of the Emperor, who had pledged his word to give them a hearing, the Legates would brave an army, rather than suffer one unhumiliated heretic to set foot within their cathedral, or have a voice in any of their deliberations. It was, therefore, well that Melancthon returned to Wittenberg, where he found better work to do than could be found in Trent. Thus closed his indirect relation with that Council.* As for those who

* Pezelius, Le Plat, and Melchior Adam are still my chief guides. By help of the dates noted in the text, my statements may be verified in their volumes.

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had approached the place of assemblage from Wittenberg and Strasburg, they soon saw it necessary to withdraw; and the Pope, alarmed, or pretending to be alarmed, for the safety of his Prelates in time of civil war in Germany, suspended the Council. It did not meet again during the life-time of Melancthon.

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At war with France, and unable to quell the turbulent Elector of Saxony, the Emperor submitted to make peace with the Protestants, and leave them free to profess their faith, and enjoy liberty of worship. "The Pacification of Passau," which received the Imperial signature in that city (August 2d, 1552), is a documentary monument of the sudden and unexpected victory which the good providence of God gave to the cause of truth, justice, and liberty, at a time when all the powers of despotism, civil and spiritual, were united for its overthrow.

The victory thus achieved was the more remarkable as of the two great leaders of the Reformation, one was dead, and the other, if not discouraged, little disposed to take the lead in hopeless debate with Romanists; but with enfeebled health, and an increasing distaste for public life, sought retirement, and put his trust in God rather than in Princes. The Princes, also, were greatly weakened by the imprisonment of the good John Frederic, and the noble-hearted Landgrave of Hesse. And more than this, as if to demonstrate that united counsels and efforts on the part of the advocates of religious reformation, was, as yet, impossible, the Calvinists and Lutherans had given up in despair their efforts after unity. The Sacramentarians, as they who had attained a clearer perception of scriptural doctrine were contemptuously called, were not only persecuted by the priesthood, but treated as heretics by their brethren. The grant of peace at such a time wonderfully illustrates the truth somewhat enigmatically expressed by the Apostle, "When I am weak, then am I strong;" and confirms the consolatory assurance of Him who is head over all things to His church, "My strength shall be made perfect in

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weakness,"—an assurance as valid for the cause of truth in the world as it is cheering for any of its advocates, when they are sent forth as lambs among wolves.

No sooner had the cries of war ceased than the Professor of Wittenberg found himself assailed by the din of new heresies. Stancarus, a man of no small influence in Poland, perhaps betrayed into indiscretion by the vain desire of simplifying a Divine mystery,* put forth a speculation of his own. Christ, he maintained, was only Mediator with the Father in His human nature. Maurice invited Melancthon to encounter Stancarus, or some of his adherents, in debate at Weimar; but he preferred sending a condemnation in writing, and advised the Prince to silence the heretic by force, and not suffer such seeds of dissension to be scattered in Saxony. More effectual and certainly more commendable were his own efforts as lecturer at Wittenberg. There he expounded Justin Martyr, a father whose writings contain imperfect views of the person of the Saviour which were acceptable to Stancarus, as well as to the Socinians. An "Answer concerning the Controversy of Stancarus," which Philip Melancthon wrote with his own hand on John the Baptist's Day, 1553, in the castle of Dessau, was appended to a manual for the use of candidates for ordination, and issued from the fruitful press of Hans Lufft, in Wittenberg, in the year following. This unequal distribution—blows to the heterodox, and instructions to the clergy—was no doubt thought very just in those days. We have since learned the more ancient and nobler lesson of "putting to silence the ignorance of foolish men" by sound instruction and good example. Stancarus died a natural death, at an advanced age, in Poland; but not so the next heretic whose error it became the duty of Melancthon to refute.

Miguel Serveto, or Servetus, a native of Villanueva in Aragon, was son of a notary, and at first of the same profession as his father. Being of a restless disposition, he began to study medicine; but finding little help in Spain, or imagining, perhaps truly, that there was greater skill

* Hist. Reformationis Polonicae, authore Stanislaw Lubieniecic, lib. ii., cap. 6. Freistadii, 1685.

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among the Moors than any possessed by his countrymen, adventured across the sea to Barbary. Indulging in that voracious inquisitiveness which devours more than it can digest, he left the study of medicine to attempt the acquisition of theology, no doubt thinking that the further he went in the way of innovation, the more fully he would resemble, if not excel, the French and German Reformers. At that time the Spanish laity in general were ripe for a revolt against all ecclesiastical authorities; and while ready to sympathize with Moor or Jew rather than with Priest, this man was almost provoked to cast off even the name of Christian.

Lubienietzki, historian of anti-trinitarianism in Poland, and principal advocate of Servetus, says that, "like a bee, everywhere collecting whatever might be useful to him, he extracted honey even from the brambles of the Koran.* From the Koran—which inveighs heavily against the doctrine of a triune God, of Jesus Christ supreme God, eternally begotten of the Father, and against idolatry and Mary-worship, yet attributes no common honour to Christ, as the Word and Messenger of God, a great Prophet, a Light of all nations, in this world and in the world to come, a man endowed with Divine power"—he derived his doctrine. How Servetus could read the Koran; whether he was of Moorish descent, and understood Arabic; whether he passed for a Mohammedan, or was one by descent; or whether he became a renegade, and engaged to corrupt the Christianity of Europe by preaching up a Mohammedan unity among Christians;—are none of them improbable conjectures. Certainly he returned to Europe, and scattered the seeds of this heresy in France, Germany, England, and Venice, twenty years, at least, before Lælius Socinus came from Italy, and adopted the notions of Servetus, together with the old Arianism, and produced the compound that is now known by his name. Socinus came into Germany in the year 1551, was cordially welcomed by the Reformers, Melancthon and Calvin among the rest, none of whom suspected that the Italian convert whom they were pro-

* Lib. ii., cap. 5.

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tecting would follow the erratic Spaniard who wrote against the doctrine of the Trinity for more than twenty years.

Calvin had already written against him, and by a just horror of his doctrine was betrayed into a desire of seeing him put to death. There is a curious little anecdote concerning Calvin. Thinking it more than justifiable to give bad men hard names, the Genevan Reformer called Servedo "that Spanish dog." In his commentary on Acts xx., Calvin wrote, "*Hispanicus canis Servetus;*" and the Italian, Francesco Lismanino, finding the bitter sentence in his copy of Calvin's Commentary, wrote this distich at the foot of the page :—

*"Cur tibi sum Calvine canis ? tuus efficit ardor
Ne canis (heu) dicar, sed miseranda cinis."*

The wit of these lines lies in an alliteration not attainable by a translator, and they directly charge Calvin with causing the execution of Servetus. Of this there can be no doubt, and it is useless to attempt any extenuation of the crime. Servetus was passing through Geneva, on his way from Germany to Venice; fearing detection, he shut himself up in his lodgings; Calvin heard that he was there, and gave information to the Magistrates; they tried him for heresy, and, with the concurrent approbation of many leading persons in the Swiss Reformed Churches, he was burnt alive in Geneva, October 27th, 1553. The Romanists exulted when they saw that imitation of their own "Acts of Faith," and were glad to say what it would not be easy to disprove, that if Servetus had been able, he would have burnt Calvin; for in those days the stronger, ever presuming that he could do God service, was ready to destroy the weaker, if he thought him a wanderer from the truth. The stronger might be Papist, Lutheran, Zuinglian, Calvinist, Arian, or Turk. The spirit was the same, and so was the effect. Lubienietzki very naturally quotes Luke ix. 55 against Calvin; and it is not unworthy of remark, that Luther had lately given a most expressive version of our Lord's rebuke in that verse. I find it thus in his old German :

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Wisset jr nicht, Welches geistes kinder jr seid? "Do ye not know of which spirit ye are the children?"

Yet a better spirit could not but spring up together with a purer doctrine; and this execution, therefore, gave occasion to the serious discussion of the question, whether the Magistrate ought to punish heretics, and especially whether the Genevan Senate had done right in burning Servetus. Melancthon was, as usual, called upon to give his judgment, and he gave it for fire and faggot. Here are his words:—

"On these questions" (whether Constantine and Theodosius did right in forbidding idolatry, and the Genevans in burning Servetus) "I answer plainly, and without any hesitation. The civil Magistrate is not a mere herdsman, (*armentarius*,) who has only to take care that peace be kept, and that property be safe, as many foolishly say. He is a Minister of God, and guardian of discipline, according to both tables of the Decalogue." In this persuasion Melancthon continued to the end of his life, and repeated his sentence from time to time, as the controversy was renewed, ever maintaining that "the law," even as administered by the hangman, "is a schoolmaster"—a pedagogue, a whipper-home—"to bring us to Christ." *

The passages of Scripture quoted by Melancthon are those which the Inquisitors themselves make use of; but he found an additional reason in the doctrine since called Erastian, a doctrine which he and his friends had been driven to adopt after accepting help of the Princes to establish the Lutheran Church, or Churches, and allowing them authority to convene a Council. Surely, then, if it be right to burn up heretics like chaff, if the "law," so often spoken of in the Epistles of St. Paul, be a worldly law, if the civil Magistrate is to order and preside over the Church, no conclusion can be fairer than that King, Prince, or President is the appointed defender of the faith, the scourge and destroyer of the misbelieving. Melancthon's adversaries maintained that the Church ought to judge of heresy, and the Church alone, and that ecclesiastical penalties should be spiritual only.

* *Pezelii Concilia*, tom. ii., pp. 204, 223, 364.

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And in this they were right, although their conception of the Church was erroneous.*

Andrew Osiander, a violent and irreligious Preacher, had propagated a novel doctrine concerning justification, which he did not attribute to faith in the Saviour, but to an influx of the essential righteousness of God into the soul of man. This was indeed "another Gospel," far more calculated to pamper the pride of the impenitent than to lead sinful men to repentance, prayer, and faith, and therefore the orthodox Lutherans always opposed it; but it was not until after the death of Osiander that his followers endeavoured to propagate it with an angry zeal that provoked a no less angry contradiction. At Nuremberg, especially, the dispute ran high, the city was disturbed, and the Elector entreated Melancthon to proceed thither, and endeavour to abate the scandal. Thither he went, accompanied by the Englishman, Alexander Aless, with Jacob Rung, and Camerarius. Their conversations and public addresses were so effectual, under the blessing of God, that the Osiandrian fancies gave place to sound doctrine, and the inhabitants were once again at peace.†

One Lauterwald, formerly a student at Wittenberg, but now a Pastor in Hungary, preached a similar doctrine, but was dismissed from his charge, by the advice of Melancthon. Canisius, too, invented another novelty, that the Lord Jesus Christ resigned the mediatorial office at the close of His mission on earth, and that He does *not* ever live to intercede for us as the Scripture teaches. Against this, too, Melancthon had to raise his voice.‡

In Poland, Lithuania, and Bohemia, vagrant Preachers scattered the Servetian blasphemies, to which, as yet, the name of Socinus was not given; and while our indefatigable apologist was writing refutations to counteract the poison, his attention was called to the doings of a former adversary, Flacius Illyricus. This man charged him with having departed from the doctrine of Luther, and consented to count some essential truths—as we hold them

* Declamat., tom. ii., p. 389.

† Melchior Adamus, in Vitâ Osiandri.

‡ Pezelius, tom. ii., pp. 189, 242. Epistolarum Liber, p. 218.

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to be—among things indifferent. He also accused him of the semi-Pelagian error, of attributing to man a co-operation with God in the work of salvation. Hence arose a bitter controversy, in which Melancthon was said to be chief of the Indifferents (or Adiaphorists), and of the Co-operatists (or Synergists).

Scarcely had Melancthon returned, after accomplishing his labour of love in Nuremberg, when Flacius challenged him to an open debate. Such a challenge he prudently declined. Luther, if alive, would have protected his friend against the calumnies which now found currency in all directions; but Flacius was bold, unscrupulous, eloquent, and strongly patronized; and, conscious of the inequality of a contest with such a one, the injured father of evangelical theology in Germany judged it proper to pursue a different course. He appealed to the Saxon Pastors for their judgment of his conduct; protested that he held fast by the Confession of Augsburg, and in that faith and communion would continue all the days of his life. But this appeal only drew forth a demand from the Pastors to state his views of certain Articles which they sent him as a test of orthodoxy; and, although his reply might have satisfied reasonable men, they, whose reason was lost in theologic hate, persisted in carrying on a tedious and most vexatious correspondence. Eventually, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar made Flacius Professor of Theology in Jena. When this controversy was in its height, the year 1556 closed. On one of its last days, Melancthon wrote a letter to his friend Jerome Baumgartner, a Senator of Nuremberg, which I cannot refrain from presenting entire to my readers:—

“That the coming year may be prosperous and happy to the Church, to the places where the Church finds refuge, and to your city, which is a home for the Church, and for many honourable studies, may the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, be pleased to grant! even He who assumed the burden of our nature, that He might keep us as branches grafted into Himself, as He says, ‘I am the vine, you are the branches.’ For certainly that is no human hatred which is in your enemies; but the devil seeks to overthrow the Churches and all honest

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polities. So much the more, then, let us hope for succour from the Son of God, and pray for it the more fervently, as Jeremiah cries, 'Thou, Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy name; leave us not.' I sent you the pages containing an account of our last dispute, which shows that the contest has been concerning matters of great importance, on which we ought to have been more united. But I commend the Church, and myself therewith, to the Son of God. Our enemies may have their applauders, they may display their triumphs; but they are acting craftily. They never produce an entire body of doctrine; but they extract a few mutilated fragments out of ours, which they know it is easy enough thus to represent as faulty. I hope I shall soon escape these quarrels, and depart into that Church where God is worshipped without guile. I pray the Son of God to preserve you and the church that is in your house, and to protect you all. Farewell." *

Still the tempest raged. The ungrateful Church, whose very existence was in no small degree due to the labours of Melancthon, as servant of Him who is the Head of all, seemed, for the time, to have forgotten all his services. Flacius was in high favour in the court of the Elector Augustus, even there where Frederic the Wise, John Frederic, and the usurper Maurice himself, had paid him reverence, and solicited the guidance of his counsels. The treaty of Passau gave the Lutherans liberty, and this was the sad abuse they made of it.

It would not be easy to enumerate the innovators, great and small, who revelled in this license of contradiction; but we may notice just one more.

A certain vagrant, bearing the name of Thammer, made his appearance in Minden. His particular notion was, that in the Church there are no more than moral precepts, such as were familiar to the Heathen. The Heathen, as Thammer taught, so long as they observed the first rules of morality, were members of the Church. "In the beginning was the Word;" but Thammer contended that there is no personal Word, no creative power called the Word; but that the living voice, the medium

* *Epistolæ, &c.*, p. 223.

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of communication for human minds, and nothing more, is that of which St. John speaks in his writings. Melancthon wrote a refutation of this folly, also, giving new proof of the fidelity with which he had always watched against the beginnings of error. But after this time (A.D. 1557) we find few controversial compositions from his pen, and those few of slight importance. After the great quarrel raised by Flacius, he withdrew from the field of controversy, and turned his thoughts with less distraction toward sublimer objects. He had never been a willing controversialist, and the last two or three years of his life were as peaceful as they possibly could be, considering that the German mind, so lately released from spiritual despotism, had not risen above the madness of an unbridled liberty.

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The German Princes cherished the forlorn hope of conciliating, I must not say the Papists and the Protestants,—for these terms they now rejected,—but the adherents of “the old religion,” and of “the Confession of Augsburg.” Having laid aside the sword when they signed the treaty of Passau, they once more vainly essayed to fling olive-twigs of peace to each other across the great gulf.

By their command several theologians met at Worms in December, 1557, to discuss the points in controversy. Julius Pflug, Bishop of Naumburg, presided. About an equal number of old religionists and of Confessionist assessors were to watch the controversy, and report it to the Princes, their masters. The Bishop of Merseburg, and five assistants, on one side, and Melancthon, with five colleagues, on the other, were to debate. Each party had notaries to preserve minutes of the meeting.

Before the time appointed for this little Council, the deputies of the Confessionist Princes called together all their “Preachers,”—for “Preacher” was the very imperfect designation accepted by the Lutheran Ministers,—commanded them to be in readiness when called on by the President to enter into controversy, and exhorted them

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to expound with clearness and modesty the doctrine of their churches. Then rose the deputy of the Dukes of Saxony, patrons of the ultra-Lutheran Flacius, in a long speech lamented that corruptions had crept into their own doctrine since the war, and advised the company to come to an understanding first among themselves, and return to an agreement with the Augsburg Confession and the Smalcald Articles. Schnepf, from Jena, added that he was commanded by the Dukes to obtain the common consent of those present to four "condemnations:" 1. Of the Zuinglians; 2. Of the doctrine of Osiander; 3. Of the proposition which Melancthon had maintained, that good works are necessary to salvation; and, 4. Of the *lapse* of those who, with Melancthon, had consented to the *adiaphora*, or "things indifferent."

Philip answered, that, if they must come to condemnations, it would be necessary to review the Articles disputed, concerning which there was much to say, to explain, to approve, or to reject. On the first Article he observed, that the Zuinglians were not to be condemned so much as the Papists, who had brought horrible idolatry into the Church, and still persisted in depravation of the sacraments. On the second Article he observed, that his own writings, condemnatory of Osiander's doctrine, were before the world. On the third he spoke at length, being less concerned for the words "to salvation" than solicitous to testify against "the impious clamours of the antinomians, who contended that the regenerate retain the Holy Spirit, and are just by faith, although they continue in the commission of crimes, doing violence to their own conscience." On the fourth he complained, that Flacius had accused him falsely, and offered to commit their quarrel to the deputies present, and to withdraw from the approaching meetings, if he were convicted of error by the Flacians.

After some conversation, the deputies deliberated apart, and unanimously answered the theologians, that, as they were sent to defend their churches against the Papists, it became their duty to unite in the common cause, to proceed without dissension, and to reserve such

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controversies to be settled in a Synod of their own. The Elector Palatine wrote them a letter to the same effect.

In due time, the President summoned the theologians to assemble, and, after they had disgusted him with a lengthened altercation, with much difficulty succeeded, as he hoped, in persuading them to keep their controversy in abeyance until it could be disposed of amicably elsewhere by themselves alone.

Bishop Pflug opened the colloquy with an air of dignity and fairness, exhorting all parties to moderation, and engaged them to promise that the disputation then to commence should not be made public. The Flacians, burning with impatience, obtained some little satisfaction by writing down their four condemnations on paper, and putting them into the hands of their antagonists, who by this time found themselves branded with the names of Synergists, Adiaphorists, Philippists, and as many other epithets as a virulent ingenuity could invent. "As giants sprang from the blood of the Titans, so," cried Melancthon in his sorrow, "do these heretics rise up from the dust of the Monks."

At length the colloquy began. The first question was concerning the rule of judgment in the Church. The Romanists talked of "perpetual consent." The Confessionists repeated the following declaration :—

"We receive the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, and the Creeds. We believe their teaching to be contained in the Confession we presented to the Emperor Charles V. at Augsburg, in the year 1530; and from that Confession we have not departed, nor ever will depart. We reject all sects and opinions that are at variance with that Confession, and especially the Anabaptists, the depravers of sacraments, Servetus, Schweckenfeld,* and Thammer. We also reject the decrees of the Council of Trent, and the Interim, with all corruptions that are repugnant to the profession that we have made. We

* Schweckenfeld, a Silesian of noble family, formerly a friend of Zuinglius and the Swiss, maintained that the body of Christ, after its assumption into heaven, was deified, and made equal with the eternal Word.

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affirm that, by the goodness of God, we are members of the church; and, God helping, within His church we will continue."

The beginnings of debate were calm, and seemed to promise a new chapter for the ecclesiastical history of Germany; but the little stock of patience which the Priests had at command rapidly spent itself, and they began to taunt the Confessionists with being at strife amongst themselves. The Flacians, reckless of the scandal they were bringing on the churches of the Reformation, furiously pursued the strife, and clamoured for the "four condemnations" which they desired the Romanists to help them to launch against their own brethren. These remonstrated, but remonstrances were vain. Further discussion became impossible. The assembly broke up: the delegates appealed to King Ferdinand for instruction, and for several weeks all proceedings were suspended. On the arrival of a letter from the King, the theologians met again, and heard the royal answer, which recommended that the condemnations should be accepted from the Flacians, and explanations of the condemned Articles admitted in return from the Confessionists. But the Romish theologians refused to proceed, some of the Flacians withdrew, Melancthon and his friends protested, and the President confessed that it was beyond his power to manage the conference. The aggrieved "Adiaphorists" acknowledged his impartiality, thanked him for his courtesy, withdrew from the scene of strife, and in a few days Worms ceased to be enlivened or scandalized by the presence of the strangers.*

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Pending the King's answer, Melancthon gladly retreated from the Babylonian society at Worms, to assist Otho Henry, Prince Palatine, in the establishment of an Academy at Heidelberg. His brother George, and his son-in-law, Caspar Peucer, met him there, their society beguiling those intervals of time which business and correspondence did not fill.

* Pezelius, tom. ii., pp. 286—312.

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Much to his delight, and the more so as the visit was quite unexpected, his old friend Joachim Camerarius joined the party; and, forgetting academies, controversies, and appeals, the party spent a happy evening in that chastened hilarity which drew forth the classic wit of our Professor, warmed anew his genial spirit, and made him forget his troubles, and brighten almost into youth again. Joachim watched for an opportunity to communicate sad tidings; but hour after hour passed away, and still he could not summon up resolution to pronounce one sentence that would overcast so joyous and serene a spirit, and send the smitten widower to water his pillow that night with tears. The party separated with pious valedictions, and the tenderness of the friend saved Melancthon from just one night of anguish, and gave him at least that little respite from grief.

Next morning, as Melancthon was enjoying a solitary walk in the Prince Henry's gardens, Camerarius rejoined him, and, as gently as he could, discharged the mournful duty. Catherine, the companion of his life, after suffering extreme pain, had expired, almost suddenly, in her sixtieth year.* Melancthon heard in silence, while the circumstances of her departure were related. And then his only words were, "Farewell, my Catherine, farewell! I shall soon follow thee." Bidding Camerarius join him, he retired to his chamber, and there strove to gather consolation from the fountains of Christian faith and hope. Soon recurring to the topics which to him had ever been material for grave discourse, the state of the reformed religion and of Germany, he began a great effort to hush the complaining of his wounded heart. From this hour, pushing onward in the way of duty, he diverted the mind from excess of sorrow by hearkening to the claims of a higher care that was to occupy him incessantly through the remnant of his own days. Yet no effort could be entirely successful. The infirmities of a premature old age were greatly aggravated, and gave his friends reason to apprehend that he would soon, indeed, be laid beside his wife. Often, from this time, did he repeat a prayer which he had heard her offer when

* She died October 11th, 1557. Melchior Adam, p. 360.

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under those premonitions of death which usually thicken as the time of death approaches: "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth."

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Neither the shock of bereavement nor the decay of nature could extinguish the fire which had burned so steadily within him through forty stormy years of ecclesiastical and religious revolution. His labours, chiefly spent among the youth of Wittenberg, were not such as to be written of in books; neither did any great public event or urgent controversy call him out into the field again for nearly two years after the last colloquy of Worms. I therefore can only select a few incidents to preserve the continuity of my sketch.

Little did Melancthon imagine that, after all the odium he had incurred by his zeal against Servetus, he was cherishing under his own roof the second and more notorious parent of the heresy of Servetus among the churches of the Reformation. Yet of this we find affecting evidence in his letters.

To Maximilian II., King of the Romans, he wrote, under date of December 1st, 1557, on behalf of Lælius Socinus, then his friend, a man thirty-two years of age. Warned by the example of Servetus, and the private admonitions of Calvin himself, this man had for some time past effectually disguised his opinions. His unsuspecting patron tells the King that Lælius Socinus, born of a noble family in Siena, son of the famous jurisconsult, Marianus Socinus, applied himself to read the holy Scriptures in Italy, hoping thereby to gain some new light upon his legal studies,—that this drew him to the worship of the true God, to all offices of piety, and to the study of Hebrew. "Then, having seen the writings of the Germans, he wished to live among the German churches, and has lived with me more than three years; and his learning, piety, prudence, and integrity in every situation, have made his society most agreeable to myself." When the report reached Italy, that Lælius was in

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the bosom of the Lutheran Church, the Inquisitors commenced proceedings, and, in the absence of the heretic, took measures to confiscate his patrimony. He now wished to solicit of Maximilian II. a nominal appointment as Ambassador at Venice, that in this character he might be able to travel safely through Italy, and take measures to secure his property. Melancthon urges the request with his usual eloquence, and entreats the King of the Romans to give succour to Socinus, as did Constantius to Athanasius! How must the chief of Socinianism have admired his own duplicity when the author of the Lutheran Confession innocently flung the cloak of Athanasius on his shoulders, to enable him to appear at the Imperial court!

Under the same date, Melancthon wrote a similar request to the King of Poland, probably to be made use of if Maximilian declined to constitute the Italian convert his Envoy Extraordinary to the Venetian Senate.

With humane simplicity, he also gave Lælius a letter for Pfauser, a Preacher in Vienna, beseeching him to introduce the Italian to the "famous King Maximilian." "Have no doubt," he writes, "of the integrity of this man; for he has lived with me familiarly more than three years, and I have been delighted much in his society by his learning, piety, prudence, and integrity. But I have no doubt that when you hear his conversation, full of learning and prudence, and see his most honourable conduct, you will freely trust him with your confidence. And he is so diligent and trustworthy, that he may be of great service in legations and many other employments to His Majesty. Neither does he shrink from long journeys, and has great knowledge of men in Italy." * This recommendation, and his own address, failed to secure the Italian the honourable commission he desired; but it seems that he actually gained letters of some kind from the Kings of Poland and Bohemia, and made his way to Venice, but without the desired success. In about two years after the death of Melancthon, Lælius Socinus and one Gentilis were openly propagating their errors in Switzerland and Germany.

* Epist., pp. 2, 4, 369.

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The honesty of an Italian of such doubtful antecedents might have been innocently suspected, especially when the Italians were generally thought to exceed most other men in guileful ingenuity. "I have this day heard by letter," wrote Melancthon, "that Peter Lotichius lies dangerously ill, after having swallowed poison in Italy a few years ago." * But Melancthon loathed suspicion, and with open heart gave welcome to every stranger who came to him in the name of Christian charity. So an aged Greek, of Cappadocia, bearing letters, as he said, from the Patriarch of Constantinople, came to collect money for the ransom of his children, taken captives by the Turks, became his guest, and found great sympathy with all who heard his story; while Philip loved not the Greek any the less for being a countryman of Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea. Soon after this Cappadocian, who might have been a very honest man, another Greek, bearing the name of Demetrius, and professing to be a Deacon in the church of Constantinople, obtained a no less favourable reception, and spent six months in Wittenberg, for the purpose, as he said, of becoming acquainted with the religion there taught. Melancthon wrote a Greek epistle to Joseph, Patriarch of Constantinople, and sent it by the hand of Demetrius, accompanied with a Greek version of the Confession of Augsburg. In return for hospitality, Demetrius cheered his host with daily tales of a great religious movement in the churches of Asia, Thrace, and the neighbouring regions. † Aided no little by the ingenuity of his guest, he speculated on the acquaintance of the Psalmist with the *Μοσχοῦοικαι*, *Muscovites*, "Russians!" of whose cruelties in Livonia he heard horrifying narratives. Geography was as yet an almost undiscovered science.

But soon he was driven back to severer lucubrations.

Flacius Illyricus, who had raised so violent a controversy concerning things indifferent, left the colloquy of Worms breathing vengeance; and, having gained high patronage, proceeded to resume the warfare. Melancthon, having studied the doctrine of the eucharist with

* Epist., p. 231.

† Melchior Adamus in Vita Melancthonis.

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more profound deference to the word of God, and less regard to later ecclesiastical tradition, now raised his voice against the "bread-worship" (*ἀρολαρπεία*) of the Romanist, while Flacius and his followers taught the same under the slightest conceivable disguise. In truth, the leaven of bread-worship was not put away from the Lutheran Church; and the first fervour of reform being past, and the perils of reformation set aside by the treaty of Passau, this master-doctrine of the Papacy revived with unabated strength, except in minds too clearly enlightened to receive it.

The doctrine, as usual, appeared in union with a most intolerant and reckless temper in its advocates, who all at once cast off concern for the honour of Christianity, and concerted measures, as they hoped, for crushing Melancthon. Flacius, assisted by some others, pretended to write a Book of Confutations, in Latin and German, and published the volume with the express authority of John Frederic II., now Elector of Saxony, and his two sons, John William and John Frederic the younger, Dukes of Saxony. This production contained the following monstrous Article:—"In the Lord's Supper Christ in very deed imparts His body and blood to them who receive; to be taken not imaginarily, but truly and substantially; not His absence in heaven, but His presence on the earth; not only to the worthy, but also to the unworthy; not only by faith, spiritually, but also by the mouth, bodily."

The faction found means to have this book read in the churches of Saxony every Sunday, while the people were left destitute of instruction in the first elements of true Christianity; and the enemies of all religion joined the enemies of Protestantism in exulting over the dissensions of the Lutherans. The majority of the Preachers chose the easier way of submitting their faith to authority, as in former times, under the Papacy; but some who refused to read to their people out of the Book of Confutations, instead of the word of God, were arrested and thrown into prison.

In Heidelberg a young man of extreme vanity, named Hesshuss, calling himself a Lutheran, courted contro-

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versy with all who rejected the unintelligible fancies of consubstantiation, impanation, and suppanation, terms which I dismiss rather than endeavour to explain. Melancthon, in self-defence, addressed a book to the Elector Palatine; which was answered by Villegagne, a Frenchman, and Knight of Malta, a man who wore the character of a convert from Romanism, but did the work of Romanism by sowing discord among the Lutherans.

In Bavaria, too, a sort of Lutheran Inquisition was established, and a set of Articles prepared, according to which persons suspected of entertaining the opinions of Melancthon were to be examined, and dealt with accordingly. Against the "Articles of the Bavarian Inquisition" Melancthon wrote a very valuable paper, which contains the clearest declaration of his doctrine on the eucharist, and is usually called his last Testament.*

Here closes his great struggle with heresy; and the fact that the most learned theologian, and one of the most pious men, in the Lutheran Church was persecuted by Lutheran Preachers and Lutheran Princes to the last hour of his life, and that his memory was pursued with intensest rancour, even to the grave, suggests weighty lessons to those earnest spirits who would undertake the reformation of their country. To study the Bible as a law-book, with Lælius Socinus, or to regard it as a depository of novelties, like the fanatics of the peasant war, or to secede from the discipline of the Church of Rome without relinquishing its doctrine, like the extreme Lutherans after Luther,—to fall into any of these errors is only to multiply confusions, retard the kingdom of truth and charity in the world, and bring reproach upon the very heart and life of Christianity, only that the mere larva of some worthless form may be substituted for it. Truly there are many Antichrists.

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Seven times nine make sixty-three. This product of the two numbers, seven and nine, each of them potent, was accounted climacterical and critical. The conflux

* Hist. Sacrament. Hospiniani, An. 1559.

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and commotion of these numbers in the human body was considered perilous; and the death of many eminent men, just as they passed this climacteric, lent confirmation to the theory. "Often," say the Professors of Wittenberg, "have we heard him dispute piously and learnedly, while he would recite the predictions which a very eminent physician and mathematician, John Virdung, drew from the stars concerning himself." The astrologer foretold many turns of fortune until the completion of the sixty-third year; but after that there was no further presage. A persuasion that his course was nearly run, followed Melancthon to the sixty-third birth-day, and then laid hold on him with the force of a conviction that he must die; and when conversation turned on the doings of his enemies, he would calmly say, "I shall not be here much longer in their way."

Trifling as it may seem, this astrological folly had all the weight of sober truth with the wisest men of those days. It makes a part of their moral history, and appears in their sayings and writings, too conspicuously to be put out of sight. Every day that Melancthon lived beyond the critical hour seemed but one more added to the term appointed for his pilgrimage on earth; and even the involuntary superstition ministered to his benefit, insomuch as it quickened his preparation for entrance on the unseen world. Daily he arose with prayer that his mind might cheerfully submit to the pangs of dissolution.*

His friends were entirely of the same mind; and the nervous temperament of a man recently bereaved, troubled for many years with calculus, irritated by contradictions and calumnies, and worn out with studies and public labours, could hardly resist the killing influence of such a prepossession. From his birth-day, February 16th, 1560, he became daily thinner and more feeble, yet persisted in his accustomed labours with unswerving punctuality. Composition, either in prose or verse, cost him little mental effort, and every sentence is said to have borne the mark of a highly-matured wisdom; yet

* "Sic ego quotidie de lecto surgo precando
Ut mens ad mortem sit duce læta Dea."

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his feeble hand toiled heavily on the paper, and the conceptions of his clear, patient mind seemed as if now they loitered in that member which had so long been the swift instrument of their perpetuation.

This was his condition when a message from Leipsic invited him to pay that University his usual yearly visit, and preside at an examination of the stipendiary students; a service which the Elector wished to invest with as much solemnity as possible, and which Melancthon had always performed with the utmost satisfaction and alacrity. He obeyed the summons; but reached Leipsic weary, discharged the duty with difficulty, and, shrinking from the cold spring winds, returned to Wittenberg in a condition of extreme discomfort. Yet the uneasiness was rather apparent in his features as he sat silent, very unlike himself, than made known by any audible complaint.

A day or two after his return symptoms of the last sickness made their appearance. Sleep forsook him, and he who had habitually slept soundly at night, woke from a brief snatch of late and imperfect slumber, weary with pain and watching. Fever slowly drank up his little strength. Even the exertion of writing, a work that heretofore never cost him any effort, became so painful that, after tracing a few lines, he was obliged to lay himself at length on a long wooden settle that was placed in his study, but not for indulgence, with his head supported on a bundle of his own clothes, covered with a skin. Dr. Peucer waited on him constantly, and, alarmed by the symptoms, sent for his oldest friend, Camerarius, to come over from Leipsic. For his own part, he expected little benefit from the remedies applied; but professed himself willing to die, and prayed God to let him depart in peace. "For some years past," he observed, "I have been unwell about this time; but this year there is an eclipse about the equinox, and a conjunction of Saturn and Mars is near." From this conjunction he divined a dearth that year, and no doubt believed himself to be under the power of those occult influences. He fancied that the stars in their courses were fighting against him.

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The Professors preserved an exceedingly minute account* of every change of symptom, and every remarkable word spoken by their beloved "preceptor and father," from which I cull as much as may best interest or edify my readers. His first discovery of extreme weakness drew forth a touching exclamation, *Extinguar sicut lucernula*, "I shall be extinguished like a lamp." Led between two, he persisted in going to the lecture-room one morning at eight o'clock; but he had forgotten the time, and gone an hour too early. Smiling at the mistake, he returned to his chamber until the clock struck nine; then, leaning on their arms, he reached the desk again, and, unwilling to betray his weakness, spoke with a degree of constrained animation on a sentence of Gregory Nazianzen; but, unable to sustain the effort much beyond a quarter of an hour, was taken from the desk to a bath. Thus ended his labours as Professor. In common with some of the greatest and the best of men, Melancthon

"His body with his charge laid down,
And ceased at once to work and live."

Still he strove hard to use each moment, and in the intervals of pain endeavoured to write letters, and even to work on the composition of a Chronicle that he was preparing in order to assist youth in the study of history. Unable to remain away from the post of duty, he caused himself to be led into the Senate-house, in spite of every entreaty; but returned sad, troubled with reflections on the spirit of contention that had found its way into the University.

It was now time to prevent the dying Professor from quitting his apartments, and public notice was given, but without his knowledge, that there would be no lecture that day. Yet he had put on his academic gown, and

* *Orationes, Epitaphia et Scripta, quæ edita sunt de morte Philippi Melancthonis omnia, cum narratione exponente, quo fine vitam in terris suam clausurit, una cum præcedentium proximè dierum, et totius morbi, quo confectus est, brevi descriptione, edita à Professoribus Academiæ Vuitebergensis, qui omnibus quæ exponuntur interfuerunt. Vitebergæ, MDLXI.*

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Camerarius was praying and entreating him to desist from such a purpose, when his son Philip came into the chamber, and assured him that there was no one in the lecture-hall. Disappointed that he could not once more address "his boys," even for a moment, he suffered himself to be disrobed, and thus ceased from the last attempt.

Every thought now turned towards eternity. "I desire," said he, "to be dissolved, and to be with Christ." This sentence of St. Paul served as a theme for long conversation with his friend, whom he earnestly admonished to remember that the fear of death was not to be dispelled by any thought of the inconveniences of life, but must be overcome by reasons of a far different kind, and by prayer; and he recounted instances of many who had been brave to contend against the ills of life, but fell before the terror of death, helpless and unarmed. This friend he strove to cheer with hope of a renewed and holier friendship in the world to come.

To one of the theologians about to leave Wittenberg for a cure in Jutland, who came to pay him his farewell, he desired some volumes lately printed in the University to be intrusted, as a present to the King of Denmark; dismissed him with great courtesy; requested the Minister to assure His Majesty, that extreme weakness alone prevented him from returning written thanks for his royal munificence, and for good-will manifested to himself. Then, as he was wont to do on similar occasions, he offered fervent prayer for both King and kingdom. After this interview some printed sheets were brought him of a book written against himself in German by one Staphylus,* and now going through the press. He cast his eye over them, but said little; and after sitting at table with his friends for the last time, returned to his study, fell into a short slumber, and awoke repeating the words which had so often been his comforters: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The sentence was then peculiarly impressive. They who should have stood by him had taken delight in embittering his latter

* Staphylus wandered out of the right way concerning justification, and ended by joining the Church of Rome.

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days; but this was his dying declaration that their malignant labour had been vain. Most appropriately it was afterwards inscribed around his portrait, *Si Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos?*

Next day his friend Camerarius, intending to return quickly, left again for Leipsic. They had been inseparable companions and fellow-labourers for forty years, and the sentence wherewith Melancthon closed their earthly intercourse is most worthy of remembrance. It was pronounced in a voice tremulous with emotion: "Jesus Christ the Son of God, who sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and giveth gifts to men, keep thee and thine, and keep us all. Repeat this salutation to your wife."

His interest in the affairs of the church failed not for a moment. When letters from Switzerland brought intelligence that the Roman Pontiff was endeavouring to revive the Council, he said that it would be better for himself to die than go to it; for any one might judge, from the present state of affairs, what quarrels there would be there, and into how many parties the professors of a purer doctrine would be divided. From Frankfort, too, came letters relating the massacre of Amboise, where twelve hundred Protestants were slaughtered, and the heads of the Baron of Castelnau, and fifteen other gentlemen, chopped off on the scaffold. No pains of body, he declared, could equal the anguish of his soul, for the calamities of the church, for the distractions that were multiplied and aggravated without necessity, and for the malice and petulance of those who had not only separated from their brethren without cause, but spared no effort to wreak their enmity on those whom they had left, so far as their malignity could reach. So did the wranglings of Protestants in Germany aggravate the death-pangs of the man whom posterity delights to honour, and in whose estimation their dissensions were even more calamitous to the church, and more to be deplored, than the torrents of blood shed by the enemies of the Reformation in France. Well might Melancthon mourn! The Germans had peace, but were nearly devoid of charity. The French Christians were united, but the enemy mowed them down like grass! With

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such an issue of the work begun by Luther and his brethren forty years before, who could expect it to abide another century? Who would not have thought that the boast of Cochläus, of the Reformation being daily buried with its authors in their graves, was no more than the truth? Yet the Reformation lives and flourishes. These churches, or others that sprang from them, are now planted over a great part of the globe. There are no more dragonnades! no more religious wars! no more Inquisition, except in the heart of two or three Papal states! Christian liberty is daily spreading, and Christian Missions are planted in almost every nation under heaven. But this diverts us from Melancthon's chamber.

On the morning of April 18th, he desired his son-in-law to tell him plainly whether there was any hope in his case. Peucer signified that there was none; and he expressed his entire acquiescence in the will of God. Soon afterwards, he desired to see a paper containing his last testament, in which he had written, many years before, a confession of his faith, as the bequest which, above all others, he desired to leave behind. The paper, however, could not be found. The defect of a written testament was partly supplied by some verbal instructions to Peucer; and then, sitting at his writing-table, he wrote, in a hand clear beyond all expectation, about three pages, beginning thus:—

“In the year 1560, on the 18th day of April, I wrote this testament in my sickness, briefly, concerning those remnants of the property which God has given me. A confession of faith and thanksgiving to God and to our Lord Jesus Christ, I had written twice before; but the papers are intercepted. Therefore I wish my confessions to be the answers to the Bavarian Articles against Papists, Anabaptists, Flacians, and such like.”—Allusion has already been made to this document, which forms part of his works, and must be taken as the declaration of his latest and maturest thoughts; a circumstance which ought carefully to be borne in mind by those who study the theology of Lutheranism, especially in relation to the eucharist.

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At some time during this sickness, Melancthon had applied himself to an estimation of the reasons "why he should not shrink from death." This momentous inquiry must have been conducted in private. He must have sat at the writing-table just mentioned, and considered, from the witness within himself, and from the teaching of the word of God, what he might venture to expect, and on what grounds he could reconcile himself to the great change that awaited him. Best able to think with pen in hand, as old writers generally are, he took a sheet of paper, and wrote thus, on the left side and on the right, the advantage and the gain of such a change. The paper was found some time afterwards, written upon thus :—

Thou shalt depart from sins.

Thou shalt be delivered from sorrows, and from the fury of divines.

Thou shalt come to the Light.

Thou shalt see God.

Thou shalt behold the Son of God.

Thou shalt learn those wondrous secrets which in this life thou couldst not fathom.

Why we are thus framed.

What is the union of the two natures in Christ.

That he would escape from controversy required no Divine assurance; but the confidence that he should escape from sorrow, enter into light, see God and His Son, fathom all secrets, and understand the profoundest mysteries, implies the possession of a religion such as we have not found in the subjects of our preceding studies, and could not expect to find among the most famous personages of the middle ages. Now, for the first time, the terrors of purgatory cease to haunt the dying; and the comfortless dogma, marked with special reprobation by Melancthon, that no man can be sure of the Divine favour, passes away before the joyful revelation of holy Scripture.—But we have yet to attend this great theologian through the valley of the shadow of death, and hear in what language he pours out his heart before God. I translate three chastely-simple prayers, addressed by him to the three Persons of the Holy Trinity on the last day

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of his life on earth. They were his daily form, and he was heard to repeat them in Latin, with a low voice, devoutly.

“Almighty, eternal, living, and true God, Creator of heaven and earth and men, together with Thy co-eternal Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified for us, and risen again; and with Thy Holy, living, pure, and true Spirit: Thou who art wise, good, true, merciful, just, giver of life and law; most free, unspotted Saviour: Thou who sayest, ‘I do not will the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted, and live,’ and, ‘Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee:’ I confess to Thee that I am a most miserable sinner; my sins are many; I have committed manifold offences against Thee; with all my heart I grieve that I have offended Thee, and pray Thee, for the sake of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified for us, and risen again, to have mercy upon me, pardon all my sins, and justify me by and through Jesus Christ Thy Son, (λόγον καὶ εἰκόνα σοῦ αἰδίου,) eternal Word and Image of Thyself, whom Thou willedst to be Victim, (καὶ μεσίτην καὶ ἱκέτην,) and Mediator, and Intercessor for us, by Thy wondrous and ineffable counsel, and boundless wisdom and goodness. Sanctify me by Thy Holy Spirit, living, pure, and true, that I may truly acknowledge Thee, almighty and true God, Creator of heaven and earth and men, eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ Thy Son, and Thy eternal Word and Image, and Thy Holy Spirit, the Comforter, holy, living, pure, and true, may firmly believe in Thee, truly obey Thee, give thanks to Thee, truly fear Thee, rightly worship and serve Thee, and behold Thee gracious through all eternity. In Thee, O Lord, I hope: let me never be confounded. In Thy righteousness deliver me. Convert me, O Lord, to righteousness and life eternal. God of truth, Thou hast redeemed me. Keep and govern our churches and our states, and this school, and give them salutary peace and sound government. Govern and protect our Princes. Nourish Thy church; gather and keep Thy church in these parts, and hallow and unite her with Thy Holy Spirit, that she may be one in Thee in the true knowledge and worship of Thy Son Jesus Christ, through and

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for the sake of this Thy eternal Son our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified for us, and risen again. Amen.

"Almighty, eternal Son of God, O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the eternal Word and Image of the eternal Father, and our Mediator and Intercessor, crucified for us, and risen again; I thank Thee with all my heart, that Thou didst take our human nature, and become my Redeemer, and, having suffered and risen again in the flesh, dost intercede for me. I pray Thee look upon me and pity me; for I am helpless and poor. Increase in me, by Thy Holy Spirit, the light of faith, and uphold, govern, protect, and save me, who am weak. In Thee, O Lord, do I hope: let me never be confounded.

"Almighty, Holy Spirit, Comforter, pure, living, true; enlighten, govern, sanctify me. Confirm in my mind and heart faith and true consolation. Preserve and govern me, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and see the pleasure of the Lord; that I may ever be and continue a temple of God through all eternity, and, always rejoicing in God, give thanks and praise Him with all the church of heaven. Amen."

Calmly but rapidly sinking into death, he spoke little more. Now slumbering, and again imperfectly conscious, he could hold little converse. The chamber then became the scene of an impressive solemnity, and one of historic interest beside; for the description of that solemnity shows what kind of change had come over the religious life of Germany, when even the cautious Reformation that Melancthon advocated so far purified the ceremonial.

There lies the revered master of the Saxon Churches, passive in the power of the grave. The Pastor of his church and two Deacons are at the bed-side, watching the symptoms of dissolution in the sunken cheek, the half-closed eye, the emaciated and scarcely-breathing frame. Now and again the Pastor bends over him with some affectionate inquiry, meant to ascertain whether life enough remains for him to derive comfort from any spiritual ministrations. There are some feeble signs of life. The Pastor and his Deacons find some well-known favourite passages which their old instructor used

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to expound with peculiar delight; and, without tapers, or host, or creed, or ceremonious confession, or chrism, or prayer for the commendation of a soul, they read in turn out of that small German folio that Melancthon helped to produce when in the flower of his days, and that issued under his own eye from the press in Wittenberg. From the Psalms, the Prophets, the Gospels, the Epistles,* they read clearly and reverently, while all present sit in silence.

The readers close their Bibles, and Melancthon, still wakeful to God's lively word, surprises the company by speaking aloud a longer sentence than will be heard from him again:—"I have always borne in mind and kept before me what John says of the Son of God: 'The world received Him not; but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.'" His lips then moved for a long time in private prayer.

That day there were no lectures. The Professors could not leave the room. The students were in their chambers, many of them no doubt fulfilling a request that they would pray God to pity His church, and not at that time punish them for their ingratitude by removing the faithful director of their studies.

Here the narrative of his sickness almost ceases to afford any further information. The attentions of his friends, tender as they were, were almost oppressive; and when Dr. Peucer asked him if he wanted anything, he roused himself just enough to say, "Nothing but heaven! Let me alone." Again the Ministers recited some shorter sentences from holy Scripture. Froschel, one of the Deacons, with profound emotion, pronounced over him the ancient benediction, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." The Greek Professor recited a sentence of the Psalmist, "Into Thine hand I commit my spirit: Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." And when he asked, "Do

* Psalm xxiv., xxv., xxvi.; Isaiah liii.; John xvii.; Rom. v.; and several shorter passages.

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you understand?" Melancthon faintly answered, "Yes." This was his last word.

In the evening of April 19th, 1560, this great and good man expired. They saw his lips move, as in prayer, after which he heaved the last breath, and was at rest. No contortion, they say, ever disturbed his features; no convulsion agitated his frame. No incoherent word broke the serene solemnity of his last sickness.

Intelligence of his death was despatched to the Elector, preparations were made for a public funeral at the expense of the University, and the body was laid in state for the satisfaction of the inhabitants of Wittenberg, few of whom did not hasten to gaze on the remains of one whose person was scarcely less familiar to them than if he had been their father, and they wept over his remains with a sorrow like that which attends a family bereavement. His funeral was witnessed by almost as great a multitude as that of Martin Luther. Paul Eber, the Pastor of Wittenberg, who had waited on him in his last hours, delivered a sermon in the city-church, whence the funeral-procession proceeded to the castle-church; and, the coffin being laid on the spot where he had been wont to kneel when taking part in the ordination of Ministers, during the forty-two years of his residence in the University, Dr. Winshemius, the Greek Professor, pronounced a singularly impressive oration. After the usual ceremonies, the coffin was laid in Luther's tomb, and the crowd dispersed, admonished of their need of more than human succour, now that God's two choicest instruments for the emancipation of Christendom were taken away; and the Professors and Theologians, among whom their labours were said to be distributed, acknowledged that successors comparable with them were scarcely to be expected in that generation.

Surely the zealot Flacius could never occupy the place of Luther. And even if a second Melancthon were to be found, with energies unimpaired by age, he would scarcely have been able to exert an influence equally effective, since the distraction of contending against heresy within the Lutheran Church, weakened the power of that Church to bear witness for the truth.

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"Yet," said the Vice-Rector, in a written address to the University, "we ought not to doubt that God will do His own work, even by means of weaker men, and men less adorned than they, if we are mindful of our duty. Let us earnestly ask the heavenly gifts we need from the Son of God our King, who maintains the ministry of the Gospel by His own power."

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We have the following description of Melancthon's person:—Rather below the middle height, but not diminutive, and of an elegant figure. Every limb well set and firm. A high, broad forehead; hair, thin and free. The neck long, giving an air of dignity, notwithstanding the humbler stature. Keen, bright eyes, with a rapid and searching glance. Broad chest, and the whole frame compact, without the slightest tendency to corpulence, or the least superfluity of flesh. Capable of sustaining long-protracted labour without weariness. Every sense continued perfect to the last. Yet he was careless of personal appearance, even to slovenliness; and if the grandeur of his intellect had not invested his outward frame with an ideal dignity, observers would probably have thought little more of it than Luther did when the young academic made his first appearance in the University of Wittenberg.

At one time of his life an excessive nervous activity often drove away sleep, so that watching, night after night, with the usual flood of restless thoughts which rushes in upon a sleepless brain, began to prey upon his health. By a careful attention to diet, with moderate use of wine at an early supper, and going to bed immediately after, he overcame this nervous wakefulness. It then became his custom to rise soon after midnight, and his most important writings were composed in the long mornings, before the noise of day began. As, without the refreshment of a quiet, early night, it was impossible to study with effect, he guarded against everything likely to provoke restlessness: therefore, if letters came towards evening, especially if they were

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from Princes or cities, or might be supposed to relate to matters requiring special attention, they were put aside until the morning, and then opened, read, and answered. About noon a short nap, such as very early risers need, restored his energies for the remainder of the day.

The necessity of taking wine, and that of the best quality, becoming generally known, the German Princes kept him well supplied. The Elector Frederic, at the suggestion of Spalatin, began the custom; and while Melancthon himself took little, a well-stored cellar was as open to his friends, and to the sick, as if it were their own. Medicine he abhorred; and beyond a careful and exceedingly plain diet, with self-control in avoiding unseasonable mental effort, he took little heed of bodily ailments, trusted much to the healing power of nature, and was seldom disappointed until, somewhat advanced in life, he suffered from a disease which often afflicts sedentary persons.

Within this delicate frame there dwelt a spirit of immense activity—a temper somewhat hasty—a mind liable to be distressingly wrought upon by anxiety for friends and country. It is not easy to conceive of a more generous nature, ever liberal and kind, always ready to confer a favour, even to surpass the request it satisfied, and sometimes concealing its own work that another might enjoy the credit. He was never known to address anyone, deliberately or publicly, in opprobrious language; nor indirectly to injure the reputation of any man by invidious observations, or by angry wit. Never did he quarrel with an antagonist. Malevolence, suspicion, envy, never lurked within his bosom. With him there was nothing sly, dissembled, covert; but manifest sincerity, simplicity, and truth. He took no pains to conceal his own errors, nor even to keep his own secrets, but spoke out with an excessive plainness before persons whom he must often have known to be ready to repeat every syllable that might be turned against himself. No friendly caution could guard him against this imprudence and its consequences. With like incaution he allowed his papers and correspondence, with persons of every variety of rank and party, to lie open to any curious eye; and while he continually en-

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joined circumspection on his pupils, his own lack of it was as continually an occasion of discomfort to himself and mortification to his friends. Yet in giving counsels to the church his prudence and caution were proverbial.

None could be more innocent of self-indulgence, and, at the same time, so ready to yield to the requests, and overlook the faults, of others, even while declaiming on the evils of license and impunity. No feature in his correspondence is more conspicuous than sympathy with studious youth, and a tender consideration for children, widows, and all whom he imagined to be necessitous or helpless. Although cheerful, and even facetious, he guarded with the utmost watchfulness against vulgarity of language; and it is said that his classic and vivacious wit was always managed with such delicacy as not to inflict a sting on any one by its allusions. In conversation with young persons and children, he condescended to entertain them playfully with riddles, or to amuse them with historical anecdotes; but, in either case, maintaining a style of classical elegance and richness that gave a charm to the most familiar table-talk. Sometimes, it must be acknowledged, his placid spirit was disturbed; but after a brief excitement, the gust would pass away, and in a few moments he has been known to laugh at his own impetuosity, or seriously acknowledge the transient folly, and strive to repair the mischief of a hasty word.

It was his custom to break off occasionally in the middle of his lectures, and question the auditory on points which required closer explanation; and this he did so judiciously, and with such ease, as brought into view stores of profound learning and an exhaustless memory. Not only in lectures, but in familiar conversation, he discountenanced all ambiguous and obscure expression, insisting on a sacred regard to truthfulness, even on the most trifling occasions. "Taste this wine," said he, to a guest, "and tell me how you like it." "It is not bad," was the opinion. "Not bad!" exclaimed Melancthon: "Good wine deserves plain and unequivocal praise. Say that it is good." He could not bear a confused, vague, indefinite, uncertain way of speaking, as when persons wishing to fix a time would say, "in a few hours,"—at

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such a time, "or thereabouts." In giving orders to servants he was always careful to speak with the utmost plainness and precision, and not unfrequently preferred waiting on himself to trusting the execution of his wishes to the negligent or tardy.

His good nature, albeit, added no little to his labours in trifles, merely to please the idle. When the fashion began of asking eminent men to give their autographs on cards, or in books, "it is incredible," says Camerarius, "how much time he sacrificed in answering such demands, rather than deny the applicants." With the same facility he wrote prefaces for books, and sometimes for books that were far from being worthy the honour of his name. Orations to be pronounced by doctors not gifted with the needful eloquence, were not unfrequently the unacknowledged product of his pen. He gave letters of recommendation and certificates of character without end; and when persons, whose character could not safely be certified, became insufferably troublesome, he has even given them money to get rid of their importunity. This, again, was an excess of good nature, which his friends lamented, and which he could not but regret, when persons the most unworthy took advantage of it. Calling nothing that he possessed his own, he seemed to divide his goods among them without the discrimination that is necessary to entitle charity to gratitude. He lived not for himself; but one great joy of his existence was to contribute to the happiness of all around.

A lively sense of responsibility, and concern for the welfare of his country, and the advancement of true religion, caused him, at some periods of his life, intense anxiety, and almost became a burden too heavy to be borne. As he advanced in age, and rose to the attainment of a more exalted religious principle, although his bodily strength gave way, his moral courage became stronger and stronger, and he could look down with a more lively contempt on worldly vanities. "I remember," says his often-quoted friend, "how we were once together at a splendid dinner, when our host, as is the custom of these men, begged the company, and Philip especially, to endeavour to put up with such food as he could

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get, and make themselves as happy as possible on humble fare ; he had done his best to make a good provision for the party, but saw how poor it was after all ; there was nothing on the table worth looking at ; and much more of the usual unmeant apologies. I well remember how Philip interrupted him with an air of indignation, pointed out the impropriety of such apologies, and seriously admonished him not to speak thus ; but rather fear lest God should punish him for ingratitude, since it is our duty to return thanks for blessings that are given in so great abundance, and not only given to those who use them well, but also to those who abuse them."

The domestic habits of so great a man must not be overlooked.

Every thought and care was directed to the advancement of religion and the welfare of his country, and the interior of his dwelling bore marks of self-abandonment. It cannot be said that Catherine Melancthon was a frugal housewife ; but, being very benevolent, she freely seconded the Christian liberality of her husband. Their income flowed in with a double current, partly consisting of the stipend due for the Professorship at Wittenberg, and partly of compensations for extraordinary services undertaken under public authority, and the spontaneous benefactions of the Electors of Saxony and other Princes, who justly regarded their most valued counsellor as worthy of every expression of personal esteem that it might be in their power to bestow. But as fast as money, or presents of any kind, came to hand, so fast was it all dealt out again. Any poor man had only to ask and have. Money, food, and clothing were given to the stranger and the indigent.

Melancthon's door stood open to all comers. Men, women, and children, rich and poor together, passed in and out from morning until night ; and not every day, but every hour, and even oftener than that, the poor carried away his charities in all directions. The rule of that house was that none were to be sent away empty. The great poured gifts upon him ; these gifts he received as from Heaven ; and then, offering himself as the

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almoner of Providence, scattered them abroad again upon the earth. So promiscuous a charity, as I have already observed, was frequently abused: beggars, naturally voracious, clamoured for supplies, and consumed what ought to have been reserved for the just claims of his children. Others, whom it would have angered to call them beggars, equalled the worst of beggars in impudence, and excited, even in himself, with all his liberality, sensations of disgust. Of this there are amusing instances.

Some learned friends had given him a valuable collection of ancient coins, gold and silver. Attracted by these coins, visitors came into his library, and one of them actually pilfered a great part of the collection. To prevent the remainder from being carried off in like manner, he begged Camerarius to take it, observing that if he did not others would.—Another time, having collected a considerable variety of modern coinage, showing the pieces to a foreigner, as the man expressed great admiration, he requested him to select a few and put them in his pocket. “I should like them all,” was the barbarous reply. “Then take them,” said he, very coolly. The stranger took them, and Melancthon, amazed and disgusted as he was, said nothing, but comforted himself with the reflection that if cupidity was ever satisfied, it must have been that day.

He never paraded his charities, although he often emptied his purse, and very often had to carry articles of plate, or other valuables, to some neighbouring merchant, and sell them for just as much money as might be put into his hand, without staying to consider whether the amount was a fair price or not.

Yet his charity or profusion towards others did not indicate indifference towards his own family, although his improvidence was inexcusable. No man could be a more affectionate husband, or a more tender father. All beneath his roof were as happy as he could make them. One servant, whom a friend transferred to him when he first came to Wittenberg, remained in his service thirty-five years, and by good sense, as well as honesty, must often have saved the family from ruin. This good man—not the mistress of the house—bought and laid in stores,

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took as much care of them as he could, regulated the daily consumption as far as his master's hospitality would suffer; and not only averted the worst consequences of his master's weakness, but managed to purchase back much of the plate that had been sold in moments of necessity, and store it up for the family. This noble servant died seven years before the good man whom he served, and who never spoke of him except in terms of warm affection and well-merited respect. If we cannot deny that this benevolence degenerated into a weakness, we must acknowledge that weakness of such a kind would not have overtaken a designing, ambitious leader of popular agitation. Men of that cast care for themselves first of all. Heedless of self, Melancthon lived for the good of others.

It is not necessary to repeat what has been said in preceding pages of the scholarship of Melancthon; nor to remind the reader of his close application to theological studies, and of his laborious and successful efforts to master the Hebrew language, in order to assist in translating the Bible into German. We must, however, pause to admire the talent and perseverance of the man who could at once renovate Greek literature in Germany, pour discredit on scholastic trivialities and the long-established abuse of the Aristotelian philosophy, re-construct the Academy of Wittenberg, found and organize other Colleges, and, besides all this, embody, in documents of imperishable value, the doctrine of the Reformation; reduce an extensive knowledge of Scripture, of the Fathers, and of ecclesiastical history, to practical application in the constitution of the Lutheran Church; prepare manuals for the examination of candidates for the sacred ministry; commentaries for more fully instructing the clergy, and plainer books for the laity; be the confidential adviser of Luther himself; the counsellor of Princes and States; the correspondent of foreign Sovereigns; the leader of controversies; the soul of conferences; the daily teacher of youth, and patron of the stranger and the destitute. That one man could effectually discharge those various functions, fulfil seemingly incompatible duties, academic and public, without negligence or failure, demands our highest admira-

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tion. But that the same man should advance in self-knowledge, that his path, like the shining light, should become brighter and brighter to the perfect day, with clearer perception of doctrinal and experimental religion, and with increasing fervour in prayer, even to his latest hour, calls for gratitude to God in all the churches of the Reformation. Achievements of such variety and magnitude by one man of tender spirit and of bodily constitution far from robust, could only have been wrought by Divine assistance. And to do all this amidst the distraction of controversy, the terrors of war, the threats of tyrants, and the scourgings of relentless calumny, proves the power of Divine grace. And, although I have not been slow to note the infirmities, and to condemn the errors and mistakes, of this extraordinary man, I could not hold myself guiltless if I were to dismiss the study of his life with a heartless and unfeeling criticism. Having excelled in so much that was great, posterity cannot but wonder that he failed so little in what was least.

SUPERSTITION.

Some readers may expect a word concerning the superstition of Melancthon.

The superstition of Melancthon is not a mere personal and isolated fact; and if he was more superstitious than some few of his contemporaries, it may have been because he was more learned than most of them. The revival of Greek and Roman literature tended little or nothing to the immediate removal of superstition, but rather to the substitution of a revived classic Paganism for the legends of the coarser Paganism of the middle ages. Our Professor was an enthusiastic astrologer, as we have seen, and the influence of this absurd superstition was never more apparent than in the last year of his life, at the very time when his attainments as a Christian were the highest. But, besides calling to mind the general prevalence of astrology as a science in the most educated circles of European society, when Kings, Generals, Senates, and Priests, despite the prohibitions of the Church, per-

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sisted in consulting the stars, especially on every occasion of public interest, we must observe that the most revered intellectual authorities would lend it the charm of their sanction. Melancthon, we find, lectured at Wittenberg on the Second Book of Pliny's Natural History, which is nothing more nor less than an astrological treatise; and, although he would certainly endeavour to harmonize it with Christianity, and improve on it in the faint light of the astronomical speculations of the sixteenth century, let us consider that a man who died more than fifty years before the discovery of the telescope could not be expected to improve much upon the text of the illustrious empiric—for in science he could be nothing more—who perished in the ashes of Vesuvius in the Augustan age.

Nor is this all that should be said in defence of our German. The Church in which he was born did not forbid astrology because it was an error of ignorance merely, but because she more than half believed in the influence of the stars on life, health, fortune, and the fates of nations. An erroneous notion of astrology was general, perhaps universal, except with infidels, who believed nothing, just as erroneous notions of witchcraft are at this day prevalent among the uneducated inhabitants of some English counties.

Nay, not only simple rustics, but the Canon Law of the Church of Rome treats of astrology as if its dreams were substantial verities. Some of my readers may be incredulous; but I recommend them to open the "Body of Canon Law" now in daily use, and they will find that it is so. In this voluminous compendium * all the branches of the occult art are enumerated. Sortilege, magic, mathematics and astrology, augury, divination, and whatever else is mentioned as a Heathen practice in holy Scripture or in ancient classics, are treated with a minute seriousness, which completely nullifies the force of an occasional caution that one or another branch of Heathenism is obsolete. And books that were printed under the highest ecclesiastical authority in the lifetime of Melancthon remain to show us that the vain terrors

* Corp. Juris Canonici. Decreti Secunda Pars. Causa xxvi. Quæst. 2, et 5.

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of blight and curse from the starry heavens, from familiar spirits, from hags and wizards, from phylacteries and amulets, were to be opposed, not by the force of better teaching, not by knowledge of Scripture, and by that faith in God which renders superstitious dread impossible, but by the counter-charms of relics, the sign of the Cross, the name of Jesus, holy water, and formal exorcism, which is no other than canonical sorcery. *

In the age of the Reformation superstition passed for science; and that which now appears only as an intellectual infirmity in Melancthon, was then regarded as an accomplishment. It is curious to observe how his biographer speaks of his faculty of divination, especially when we remember that Camerarius was familiar with the entire circle of scholars who gathered round the great theologian whose life he records, and therefore knew the standard of opinion in the most enlightened circles of Germany. For perusal in those circles, and throughout the learned world, he did not think it necessary to add a single sentence by way of apology or explanation.

"As Philip Melancthon was a man not easily to be deceived in investigating and searching out a thing, so we know that he presaged many events which afterwards came to pass; and that having witnessed the confirmation of his dreams, and the certainty of what often appeared to him in sleep,—which kind of men Aristotle calls *ἐνθυνεῖσθαι*, *correct dreamers*,—we know that he scarcely ever was deceived while thus divining. Others, also, attempted the same, by way of imitation; and you might hear many, on all sides, asking the meaning of dreams, telling their own dreams, guessing and dreaming again, they and their affairs being as unlike him as possible. But all this was no more than a preposterous imitation; while it is certain that many followed his example with both applause and profit. And as he knew that it is of the utmost advantage to youth to direct their studies with consideration of the universal nature of things, and

* See the treatise *De Strigimagarum Dæmonumque Mirandis*, by the famous Silvestro Priario. Romæ, 1524.—My copy of a later edition, of 1575, once enriched the Seminario Romano of the Jesuits, in the Eternal City.

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with research into the causes in which things originate, in order to the exercise of piety, and the right performance of every duty, he first awakened the inclination, and excited the curiosity, of his disciples, by treating learnedly on subjects of natural science, and then proceeded, by many methods, to render the pursuit agreeable. This he did by drawing attention to that part of the art of medicine which treats of roots and other such things, the knowledge of which, being practically tested, is not only agreeable, but extremely useful, and even necessary, in order to any hope of success in the art of healing. Passing thence to that which Ptolemy regards as part of astronomy, foreseeing things future, and unfolding things occult, by inspecting the aspect of the sky, and making observations on its state. (Many persons now call this astrology.) To this mode of reasoning, therefore, he conducted many, either by the recommendation of his own experience, or by commending the art. For he was not ignorant that the minds of youth may be easily captivated by a certain liberal curiosity, and, being thus withdrawn from other occupations, may be retained within the circle of good and useful studies."

Chiromancy, however, he did not consider very worthy of serious attention, but classed it with follies and vanities of men. Charms and superstitious fortune-tellings he utterly rejected, and failed not to mark them with the strongest detestation. The extravagancies of some astrologers he also reprobated, as calculated to bring their "mathematics" into disrepute.* In short, he began, but only began, to rise above the superstition which had hindered the birth of science, no less than it had obscured the glories of religion.

More than the duration of a life was needed for the full emancipation even of the most powerful and candid of minds from the thralldom that swayed its power through so many centuries, where new light, such light as had not yet dawned upon the world, was needed for dispelling superstition, without, at the same time, destroying the simplicity of faith. Some minds, indeed, carried away by the violent reaction inseparable from such moral

* Camerarius, xvii.—xx.

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revolutions as that of the sixteenth century, might cast off all trust in astrology and every branch of mediæval mathematics and physics; but they were ill qualified to resist the scepticism that always usurps the seat of a discarded superstition; and the same cautious temperament which made it more easy for Melancthon to discriminate between what was to be rejected and what was to be retained in religion, naturally indisposed him to spend much effort in disentangling himself from errors which did not yet appear to be so directly opposed to revealed truth as in reality they are. Much of them he allowed to pass as things indifferent.

Like Lazarus reviving within the sepulchre, but bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, even while the voice of the Prince of Life bade him come forth, so Melancthon, not having yet emerged from the depth of mediæval darkness, and scarcely possessed of the new faculties of that resurrection-life, needed friendly hands to set him free from those entanglements, and enable him to move at liberty. But no hand was, as yet, practised in the service, which needed extreme tenderness, nor were the bystanders of those who are sufficiently enlightened to perceive the need of it. These were too busy in contending for essential truths against fundamental errors to attack inferior enemies; and, on reviewing the history of the Reformation, we may be well content that the *exuvie* were allowed to drop off gradually, so long as the persons whom they disfigured were in truth raised up from death to life.

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We have seen how Melancthon found the world in 1497; let us now see how he left it in 1560. After leaving his body deposited in the grave at Wittenberg, a survivor might have described the state of Europe at that day in such terms as these:—

In Germany, notwithstanding the recent controversies on points of doctrine, which have divided the Protestants, and both discredited and weakened the cause of the Reformation, the Princes and States of the Augsburg

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Confession are all agreed in resisting the Pope and Court of Rome, and refusing to take part in any Council where the Pope presides, where the word of God is not acknowledged as the rule of faith, and where all present may not speak and vote with entire freedom. They spurn with common indignation the proposal of holding a Council, not summoned for the revision of doctrine and reformation of the Church, but for the extirpation of reputed heresy and the extinction of their cause, which is branded with the reproach of schism. Whatever advantage the Lutherans may have lost through disunion, in respect of doctrine or discipline, their best men may rejoice that all the labours of the last forty-three years have not been spent in vain, but are now rewarded by the establishment of Protestant principles, and the utter exclusion of Papal jurisdiction from every state where those principles are dominant. And the Court of Rome must confess with sorrow that when Pope Pius IV. ascended the throne of his predecessors, last Christmas, he found it without support from Germany; and that, although he has made friends with the Emperor, if his messengers were now to present themselves before any assemblage of Lutheran Princes, those Princes would not deign so much as to look into the letters apostolic.*

In Scotland the Reformation is established. John Knox is in the height of power; and, after all the atrocities committed by Beaton and the Priests, the Protestants are enjoying liberty to worship God according to their conscience. The Reformed worship is ordained by public proclamation.

From the Netherlands the King of Spain is compelled to withdraw his troops. The royal garrisons are empty. The furies of Alva have raged in vain; and the blood of myriads of confessors has purchased that liberty which now makes the Low Countries the asylum of the persecuted, and the chief seat of civil and religious liberty in Europe.

Even in Spain the Gospel finds entrance. Truly, the civilized world hears with horror of the *autos de fé*,

* As is proved by what took place a few months later in the Assembly of Princes at Naumburg. F. Paolo, Hist. del Concilio di Trento, lib. v., an. 1561.

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which are perpetrated in the chief cities of the Peninsula with greater frequency, more savage ostentation, and larger numbers of human victims, than in any preceding period of Spanish history; but a writer three centuries later may add, that the Inquisition has never since those days been able to indulge itself in equal slaughter. Even while the martyr-fires are blazing, and in spite of the strenuous and sanguinary vigilance of King Philip II. and the Inquisitor-General Don Fernando Valdés, daring carriers are crossing the Pyrenees, laden with copies of the New Testament, translated by Encinas. This Don Francisco de Encinas, once a student in the University of Louvain, was also a pupil and friend of Melancthon, whose noble spirit he imbibed; and, when in a land of liberty, had used that liberty in translating the word of God for his countrymen, and in writing books illustrative of the best of all books. Recommended by Melancthon, he visited England, enjoyed the hospitalities of Archbishop Cranmer,—the same Prelate whom they burnt alive at Oxford four years before the death of his illustrious friend. Don Francisco is deceased; his brother, too, was burnt alive in Rome many years ago: but the work in which they both laboured spreads in Spain. Evangelists are preaching in good Castilian from house to house. The doctrine of Luther and Melancthon is taught from their books in the secrecy of monasteries; and Christians, although disguised under the gown and the cowl, are propagating the Gospel with an ardour that, if it does not conquer the force of persecution, is likely to defy its terrors for some years to come. Already evangelical Spain has its catalogue of martyrs.

Italy is not unmoved. In spite of that cold-blooded, lynx-like, supreme Inquisitor, the Cardinal Ghislieri, the tidings of truth are diffused, from the Alps to Spartivento, by messengers, whose gentle but swift footfall cannot be heard, nor their persons distinguished by his most diligent familiars. Truth is felt everywhere. So great is the terror of its evidence and power in Rome, that the first members of the court struggle with it in their own bosoms, and all who venture to speak or act with freedom are suspected of having caught the contagion.

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Even the famous Cardinal Giovanni Morone, who has already figured conspicuously as a champion of the Roman See, is just made prisoner in the castle of St. Angelo, charged with teaching and propagating the errors of the Protestants; but the charge is false, and he ventures to demand a formal inquisition, under which he hopes to prove himself clear of the taint of this new doctrine. Another Cardinal, Egidio Foscari, awaits purgation from the same suspicion, also suffering imprisonment as a favourer of these troublers of the Church. Diocese after diocese is reported to be overrun with heretics, and neither layman nor ecclesiastic presumes to count himself sure of liberty, or even life, for a day, since the charm and prevalence of this new doctrine give probability to any such accusation, against whomsoever it may be levelled. Since Ochino fled, even better principles than those he taught have been propagated with amazing rapidity and acceptance.

No less a personage than Renée, daughter of a King of France, and mother of the Duke of Ferrara, is now at the court of her son, where she makes no secret of her attachment to Calvin and his doctrine, and is beset by Priests, who propose to her the alternative of a return to the bosom of the Roman Church, or a compulsory retreat from Italy. She cannot renounce her faith, therefore she must depart. But it is not so easy to purge away the conviction of Gospel truth that has gained possession of all classes of people—the Prelate and the barbe, the royal Duchess and the poor Calabrian peasant.

Among the subjects of the Duke of Savoy, in Piedmont, and in the Alps, through the valleys of Montcenis, Lucerne, Angrogne, Perouse, and St. Martin, the flame of ancient piety has rekindled. They are at this day repeating the household devotions of the Vaudois. Traditions of an apostolic faith revive gloriously again around those hearths where the martyrs of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries prepared themselves to suffer death from the Inquisition of Toulouse.

The mantles of those holy men are fallen on their children. People say that they are Zuinglians; but that is utterly a mistake. They were the reputed followers of Waldo before Zuingle was; and ages before the time of Waldo they

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owned Apostles as their teachers. Now, the spirit of revival that has wakened up the world burns anew in them, and they display such a boldness of resistance when the Duke of Savoy threatens once more to let loose fire and sword upon them, that he is overawed, half reveres the sublime faith that his threatenings cannot shake, and is actually sending a request to Rome to be permitted to send Missioners into the valleys instead of soldiers, who shall ply them with arguments, in hope that he may be saved from shedding their blood, and hearing their souls at the last day call out for vengeance on him. But the Pope, having no dread of blood-guiltiness, replies that the Duke must do his duty, extirpate the heretics, and, whatever God may judge, be content with the apostolic benediction of Pius IV.

Between the peasant-war, in the early years of Melancthon, however justifiable, and this conflict,—between the armed fanatics of Germany under Munzer, and these unarmed mountaineers, with decrepit grandsires, helpless mothers, and innocent babes, all marked for slaughter,—there cannot be the most remote comparison. It is the Lord's battle that has now begun; and if the threatenings of armed bigots move terror, the sublime, heaven-breathed courage of the Lord's hosts, not armed with material weapons, but invincible in the panoply of heaven, commands reverence. Another war is waged. Such a war is waged as the deceased Reformers never saw; but it brings hopes of a victory more spiritual, and of a conquest more enduring, than any which even they have won.

Are the men of Wittenberg watching the events around? For a few weeks they have been unable to think of much more than their own affairs. Preachers and Professors have been trying their utmost powers of eloquence to do honour to the memory of Melancthon. Academic orations have served to retrace his personal history and the history of his times. A profusion of elegies in Latin, Greek, and German, have been flung upon his tomb. But the effusions of poetry, and the pathos of personal affection, are exhausted, and the successors of Melancthon must pause to survey the position of parties in the world around them, in order to ascertain more certainly their own vocation.

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Nowhere is the battle-array so grand as in France. The court, the Parliaments, the army, and the people, are divided between Rome and Calvin. On the one hand, there are new churches; and on the other, imprisonments, tumults, and martyrdoms. In this very year, 1560, the standard of the Gospel is first planted in Montauban, still famous as the centre of French Protestantism; and some of the churches that appear most conspicuously in the annals of reformed France are just now in the process of establishment. In fields, forests, market-places, the preachers declare the truth: after extemporaneous prayer, the psalms of David, versified by Marot, resound from lips that never sang before, while consciences that had slumbered from the cradle are awakened. Citizens of all classes are openly renouncing the semblance of a faith they never felt; towns after towns are seceding from the old Church; consistories hastily form themselves, and these consistories are appointing such persons as it pleases them for Ministers. But their haste must not be too severely criticized; for this is not a time to linger. God is riding in this whirlwind, and His presence must be acknowledged, even though its influence be not understood by all the converts or proselytes who bow before it. There is a spirit of life abroad; but there are also elements of confusion working. Worst of all, politics already influence the calculations of the best men, and even the most devout are leaning on the arm of flesh. Condé and Guise are become party names. The oppression of the stronger party, with its craftiness, compels the weaker to resort to combination in self-defence. The necessity of their case requires it; and, once combined, they cannot refrain from employing arts which carry onward combination so far that it becomes conspiracy. The beginning was justifiable, but every step following has not been guided by that wisdom which "cometh from above;" and the massacre of Amboise, the tidings of which reached Melancthon on his death-bed, is mournfully felt to be a premonition of calamities that are sure to follow. The wisest men on both sides dread the consequences, and propose the assemblage of a National Council to settle the differences of religion in France, without recourse to any alien power for sanction or

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assistance in the good work: but the Pope strongly disapproves of such a measure; and, in order to prevent it, becomes urgent for what his predecessors had so long evaded, namely, a General Council. Meanwhile, reconciliation of the adverse parties is confessed to be impossible, and civil war is waged beyond a remedy.

While the Lutheran churches were guided for many years by the united counsels of Luther and Melancthon, and then by the influence of Melancthon alone, until the rise of ultra-Lutheran controversy, the independent congregations of France enjoyed no such advantage. In the year 1559 a sense of weakness induced some of those congregations, or churches, to seek for unity; and in a secret meeting in Paris, held under cover of the night, the Pastors of eleven of them formed themselves into a body, dignified with the title of "First National Synod," M. de Morell, the Parisian Pastor, presiding. The first canon of this little synod was a declaration of independency, and, therefore, presents an ingredient of confusion which no contrivance could ever successfully neutralize.* The Articles have every appearance of being drawn up in great haste; the single object of the meeting was evidently that of ecclesiastical construction; and the reader is disappointed as he detects an obvious defect of those higher motives and affections which ought to have been dominant in the representatives, if such they were, of congregations of confessors, and should have prevailed over every lesser consideration among the brethren of martyrs.

At the point of time we take for our survey, the second National Synod of the Reformed Churches of France was called; and, notwithstanding the smallness of their number, and the spirituality of their vocation, the members thought

* No church, nor church officer, be he Minister, Elder, or Deacon, shall claim or exercise any jurisdiction or authority over another.—Quick's Synodicon, vol. i., p. 2. Certainly, no church or congregation should exercise authority over another; but the aggregate of churches form one Church, represented in the Synod, and there the general Church exercises authority over each particular church. This was attempted in France; but the jealousy of interference betrayed in this first canon is portentous. The Synods assembled at irregular intervals during just one century. The twenty-ninth and last met at Loudun, November 10th, 1659.

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themselves obliged to address a memorial to the States of France, laying down rules for the government of the new Sovereign and his councillors, and requiring one high officer of state to refrain from acting in that capacity, because of some defect in his appointment. This Synod of Poitiers added several articles to the first sketch of discipline, and amended others. Bating organic imperfections, the articles might generally pass as very good; but there is the same want of evangelic earnestness, the same exuberance of ecclesiastical politics, the same secular spirit breathing in a new ecclesiastical dialect, which bodes ill for the peace and prosperity of "the Reformed Churches in France"—the Reformed Church of France they would not say, because a collective designation would have been a mark of unity, such unity as they needed, but did not desire. The forms and policy of Swiss Cantons were adopted here, and the unspeakably important work of rearing a spiritual edifice in this great kingdom was conducted on the false plan of establishing a republican principle; and, in the very constitution of the Synod, confounding the sacred and secular elements together. Worse than all, if possible, was their meddling with the administration of civil government.

Thus the Protestantism of France became irrevocably a political party: it is so in great part at the present day; and the scourge of persecution lies on it heavily. Nothing short of a new spiritual revival, a reduction to the first religious principle which gave it birth, but was forgotten in its very infancy, can recover it from the inveterate deterioration.

But to return.

England, free from such confederations as that of the German States, as yet nearly untouched by the spirit of Swiss and Gallic ecclesiasticism, and happily released from French political complications by the loss of Calais, has been advancing in an entirely different course. There was frequent correspondence between the wisest and best men of the two countries, and the communications of Melancthon and Cranmer I cannot but regard as constituting a feature of peculiar interest in the history of this period.

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We were not able to review the correspondence of Melancthon in relation to King Henry VIII. without confessing some dissatisfaction, a dissatisfaction which was only mitigated by the consideration that the laxity and adulation betrayed in his letters to that Sovereign entirely disappeared after he had attained to a sounder judgment, and undergone, as I venture to believe, a decided change of heart. His communications with Cranmer were at all times altogether satisfactory. Often he introduced learned and pious foreigners to the hospitality and patronage of the good Archbishop, and held most important correspondence with Martyr, Bucer, A Lasko, and others, infusing into the infant Church of England the spirit of Christian moderation, which it was so necessary, and yet so difficult, to maintain in those times of revolution.

Our Cranmer, calculating on the influence of Melancthon in Germany, proposed a measure which, if it could have been adopted by all parties, would have raised them above the dissension that has been the scourge and disgrace of evangelical churches for the last three centuries. He desired that the Protestant churches might have one harmony of doctrine, drawn up out of the pure word of God, in which all could agree. He had observed how unloving disputations on the sacraments, and controversy concerning certain Divine decrees, keeping Lutherans, Calvinists, and Zuinglians apart from one another, had made them all contemptible in the eyes of the Romanists, and brought dishonour on the cause of Christ. Both Cranmer and Melancthon agreed that the most learned theologians of the several churches ought to meet together to deliberate on the points of difference with friendliness and charity, and prepare a code of common faith, and a standard of general practice. They further thought that England was the fittest country for the holding of such an assemblage; and young King Edward VI. would have most joyfully granted his permission and protection. Cranmer, therefore, wrote further to Bullinger for Switzerland, Calvin for France, and Melancthon for Germany, soliciting their aid.

Melancthon answered that, "if his judgment and opinion

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were required, he would be willing to hear the sense of other learned men, to speak his own, and to give his reasons, τα μὲν πείθων, τὰδε πειθόμενος, *both persuading and being persuaded*, as became a conference of good men, leaving truth, the glory of God, and the safety of the Church, not private passion, to carry the victory." And, referring to the Confession of Augsburg as the first document of the kind, he acknowledged that some ambiguities of that Confession might be well removed, as they were only occasions of contention. In the church of Christ everything ought to be expressed clearly, everything called by its proper name. "They should call a spade a spade."*

But the death of Edward VI., the Marian persecutions, and especially the martyrdom of Cranmer, the so-called reconciliation of the Parliament and Convocation of England to Rome, and the usurpation of the Primacy by Cardinal Pole, not only frustrated such designs, but removed the men who might have carried them into execution, when Queen Elizabeth succeeded to the throne. The terrible reign of Mary closed in the year before the death of Melancthon, which was one of the most eventful years that can be found in the history of England.

Matthew Parker was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in one of the last days of 1559. He was the first Primate of England, after Augustine, who took the see without the slightest mark of dependence upon Rome. By virtue of an Act of Parliament passed to that intent, the Bishops of Chichester, Hereford, Exeter, and Bedford performed the ceremony of consecration, without any Papal bull, or Aaronic ornaments, with no gloves, no ring, no sandals, no mitre, no pall. They invoked the influence of the Holy Spirit with imposition of hands, and heard a discourse pronounced by a grave and learned man concerning the duty of a Pastor towards the flock, and of the flock towards their Pastor. In the presence of a large congregation the new Archbishop received the communion in both kinds; and the fervent prayers of Christian people gave him real consecration.

This is the Metropolitan of England, who has just

* Strype's Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer, book iii., chap. 24.

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entered on the duties of his office with the year 1560. We observe that royal Commissioners in ecclesiastical causes, with power of administering civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, are sent throughout the country; and if any one of my readers objects to the propriety of this procedure, I will ask him whether it was not a vast improvement on the former fashion of sending Papal Commissioners into this country to burn Christians, and force the Magistrates to be their executioners.

In the same happy year our country witnessed glorious events.

The good English custom of Mayors and Corporations going to church to hear sermons, was disincumbered of the mummerly of idolatrous processions, which then ceased—we may hope for ever—from our streets.

The sounds of psalmody in our churches now began to drive away the Latin chants, and superseded the solitary recitations of the choirs. From the pulpits were heard sermons of returned exiles, men disciplined by poverty, weariness, and peril, to set forth the truths of Scripture with burning earnestness, dealing out the bread of life to the hungry, as those alone can do whose own souls have been fed and kept alive by it. And another ancient custom, that of open-air preaching, was made good use of when those reverend exiles addressed the people at Paul's Cross. Dr. Sandys, Bishop of Worcester, and old Coverdale, translator of the Bible, preached there. And, in remembrance that such congregations were so effectively instructed, we may ask, Why should we not have a Paul's Cross pulpit again, and "mighty audiences," as aforetime, in the heart of the city of London? Queen and nobility then came gladly to the churches, and by their presence comforted those confessors whom the tyranny of the preceding reign had driven from home and country.

John Jewel, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, and Alexander Nowell, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, this year openly challenged the Papists to controversy, and began, the one his imperishable Apology, and the other his Catechism, an elegant model for future compendiums; and most valuable has it been for maintaining the standard of religious teaching in our colleges and schools.

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This year the English episcopate was raised higher than it yet had been by the consecration of Alley to Exeter, Parkhurst to Norwich, Horne to Winchester, Scambler to Peterborough, Pilkington to Durham, and Best to Carlisle. Grindal was already in the see of London. And now, as never before, the Bishops chose men for ordination whom they conceived to be best fitted for the present exigencies of the sacred office,—“no scholars, nor men of any University, but men of sober conversation, (perhaps tradesmen before,) who could read English well; who, nevertheless, in the present necessity were ordained, that they might be readers in the churches, to read the common prayers and homilies.”* True ecclesiastical reformation, that is to say, personal reformation of the Clergy, was undertaken with a solicitude worthy of its object. Pelagians, free-willers, and Papists were all proscribed; the iron hand of authority was laid on all wanderers out of the right way with a comprehensiveness that, at this distance of time, provokes a smile; and, whatever may be said of it, it certainly was a temporary measure that served well to keep the common enemy under effectual restraint.

The Bishops, sincerely Protestant, and most of them far more evangelical than the Queen herself, heartily resumed the labour begun by Cranmer, and went considerably beyond their German brethren, by applying to Her Majesty for the removing of *that offensive evil*, images, out of the Church of England. Induced by the cogency of their arguments, and perhaps, also, constrained by the unanimity and seriousness of her advisers, the Queen, after considerable reluctance, condescended. Thus was done by authority, and after due consideration, what the people had executed with tumult in Switzerland and some other countries. Simultaneous with the solemn annihilation of images, was the cessation from offering prayers for the dead, and from all funeral ceremonies which implied that superstition.

Meanwhile, the proceedings of the great enemy were notable, showing that if this was the time of commencement of established Protestantism in England, it was also the beginning of a succession of intrigues

* Strype's Life and Acts of Archbishop Grindal, book i., chap. 4.

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and violences, on the part of our enemies, that the people of this day are too apt to forget. First of all, incendiary books and pamphlets were dispersed all over the kingdom by unseen hands, tending to produce discontent and sedition. Then it was found that Pope Pius IV., solicited by some of the Court of Spain to excommunicate Queen Elizabeth, chose to essay first the milder method of conquest, even pleasant words. He assured her, that, above all things, he longed for her salvation, and was jealous of her honour, and advised her to put away evil counsels, and follow his fatherly admonitions. Whatever succour she could wish for the comfort of her soul, or for the establishment of her royal dignity, he promised to give it her, according to the authority, place, and charge committed to him from above. As the father in the Gospel waited in love to receive his returning son, even so did Pius IV. wait to receive back his daughter Elizabeth from her wanderings. An Italian Priest brought the letter apostolic, and made various overtures of concession, which might seem to meet some part of the demands of Englishmen for external reformation; but all was in vain, the Nuncio was dismissed in sorrow, and no other such person was ever suffered by good Queen Elizabeth to appear on British ground.

But others came. By Papal dispensation, in this very year, several of the most active and learned Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits, assumed the character of Protestants, and actually preached against Romanism. They also preached the wildest doctrines, and attempted to multiply all sorts of innovations, in order thus to counteract the labours of the Clergy, sow controversy, and make "the new religion" look ridiculous in the sight of Englishmen themselves.

Another great work of the year 1560 was the printing of the Geneva Bible, as it is called. After upwards of two years' close application, some exiles in Geneva * produced an improved version in English. It exerted great influence on other translations in the vernacular languages of Europe, although it was not favourably received here;

* Miles Coverdale, Christopher Goodman, Anthony Gilby, Thomas Sampson, William Cole, of C.C.C., Oxon, and William Whittingham.

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and, no doubt, it hastened the production of our present admirable version. Not without interest the reader in 1860 may observe the exultation of those good men,—to borrow their own words,*—"in respect of this ripe age and cleare light which God hath now reveiled."

Turning again for a moment from our own country, and observing the state of religion in the German empire, Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland, we find the beginnings of the diplomatic management of the Court of Rome, and of that irregular warfare of Jesuitism, which soon won back to the Papacy much of the ground which it had lost.

While Melancthon sent messages from his death-bed to the King of Denmark, the King of Poland, in servile allegiance to Pius IV., was receiving instructions from that Pontiff to support the authority of a Nuncio sent into his dominions for the express purpose of rooting out heresy. "Be obedient," said the Pope, "to our salutary admonitions: to the utmost of your power drive away the pest of heretical pravity from your kingdom. Repress it while you may. Deny all access and all familiarity to heretics and their abettors, and refuse them all favour. Nay, not only so, cast them out and expel them from your kingdom. If you cannot amend any of those near your person who have been corrupted, however much you may love them, however acceptable may be their services, remember the precept of our Lord, who will not have us to spare foot, nor eye, nor hand, if it be an occasion of offence, but cut off the obnoxious members, and cast them away. Even so, if you will not consent to treat them more severely, at least spurn them, and drive them from your presence, that, either confounded or conquered, they may repent."†

Bohemia, having gained a trifling advantage over the Court of Rome, by the concession of the cup to the laity, was rapidly sinking into the inveterate disease of political religion, under the name of reformation. But the real religious reformation had very slightly penetrated into Bohemia, and much less into the neighbouring state of Hungary.

* Address "To the Christian Reader."

† Le Plat., tom. iv., p. 617.

MELANCTHON.

This brief review of Europe in 1560 might be much enlarged ; but it is quite sufficient to show the advance of the Reformation within a period much shorter than the life of Melancthon, but collaterally with his labours—labours that were not confined to Saxony, but sent forth a continuous influence all over Christendom. It admits us also to a prospect of that reaction which deferred to the nineteenth century the prosecution of the evangelical conquests of the sixteenth.

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